IX

First of American Poets
1839–1842
(LETTERS 371 TO 445)

Entering the new year of 1839, Bryant wrote his brother Cyrus, “I have weathered the storm, . . . and the sky now begins to brighten.” He had just recounted to the Evening Post’s readers its recent gains: “Our journal, notwithstanding it has been assailed with worse than mere party hostility, by a class who in their delusion imagined that we were hostile to their better interests, has shared in the general prosperity. During the last year, the circulation, both of our daily and semi-weekly sheet, has rapidly and largely increased. The latter has now reached an extent far greater than it has enjoyed at any time of which there is any record since its first establishment. In the same period the daily contents of our advertising columns have doubled.” This encouraging growth, though not realized at once in profits, became evident in 1840, when net income was higher than it had ever been during Bryant’s management of the newspaper.

As his problems eased, Bryant gave some attention to those of others. William Leggett, whose mismanagement of the paper’s affairs had shaken neither the regard nor the loyalty of his former partner, was in difficult straits. Though his new journal, The Plaindealer, was much admired by radical Democrats, it failed within a year, leaving him ill and impoverished. Having written a biographical article for the new Democratic Review in which he praised Leggett highly as a man and a journalist, Bryant persuaded Martin Van Buren, whose presidency Leggett had at times sharply criticized, to appoint him to a diplomatic post in Central America. But Leggett died suddenly in May 1839, before he could take office. In addition to the Democratic Review article, which appeared after Leggett’s death, Bryant eulogized his friend in the Evening Post and wrote the inscription for his monument at New Rochelle, and announced the imminent publication of a collection of Leggett’s editorials, which he and Theodore Sedgwick III prepared for the benefit of Mrs. Leggett.

In June 1839 Dana asked help in finding a publisher for his younger son’s account of seagoing adventures, and Bryant began an intensive effort which resulted fifteen months later in publication of Two Years Before the Mast. In August he took up the cause of some newly enslaved Africans who had seized the Cuban ship Amistad and were trying to sail it toward Africa when they were seized in turn by an American warship. Bryant engaged Sedgwick to prepare legal arguments in their behalf for publication in the Evening Post, and, when they came to trial in Connecticut, to represent them in court actions which resulted eventually in their being freed by the Supreme Court of the United States.

In November 1839 Bryant lost a valued friend in Theodore Sedgwick II, father of his young associate, who had introduced him twenty years earlier to
liberal economic theory. In a notice of the elder Sedgwick's life and writings in the *Biographical Annual*, he wrote of this "politician without party vices" whose character he felt should be "held up to the imitation of all men engaged in political life." Here, as in his eulogies of Leggett, were prefigured the graceful discourses on Cole, Cooper, Irving, Halleck, and others which would distinguish him as the memorialist of his literary generation.

In October 1839, to supplement the occasional editorial help he got from Henry Anderson and young Sedgwick, Bryant engaged Parke Godwin, later his son-in-law, as a reporter. Two years earlier he had brought William G. Boggs out of the pressroom to join the firm and help manage its business. By the end of 1839 they had satisfied a mortgage held by the widow of the paper's founder, William Coleman, and become sole partners, with Bryant holding three-fifths of the shares. In November 1840 they admitted Godwin to a small share of the ownership, taking his note in return. A job printing office for commercial paper and inexpensive books was opened in 1840; by the end of 1841 it accounted for more than one-quarter of the newspaper's earnings. That year a weekly was added to the daily and semi-weekly editions. In March 1840, announcing the enlargement of the *Evening Post's* format because of increased circulation and advertising, Bryant wrote, "The prejudices against it, with which its enemies had labored so vehemently to poison the minds of men of business, have been gradually overcome," and "it is but just that we should profit in turn by the restoration of reason to the community."

As the pressure of work and worry eased somewhat, Bryant found more time for his friends and for holidays away from the city. Lecturing in New York in February and March 1840, Dana visited the Bryants in a little house on Carmine Street to which they had moved from the Fourth Street boarding-house in 1837. In April Cullen visited the Moravian towns of Easton and Bethlehem in Pennsylvania, becoming so charmed with their quaintness that he took Frances there for a visit that summer, and at the beginning of May he settled his family in a new house with a garden and fruit trees on Ninth Street. He spent a few days in June with Dana and James Hillhouse at New Haven; later that month he and Thomas Cole trudged through the ravines and over the ridges of the Catskill Mountains. In August he went on a long, solitary walking excursion fifty miles up the Housatonic River valley of Connecticut and Massachusetts, then over the hills to Cummington, stopping on his return at New Lebanon, New York, to visit young Samuel Jones Tilden, who had lately written occasional political articles for the *Evening Post*. In the spring of 1841 Cullen took Frances and Fanny for their first visit to his family at Princeton, Illinois, going out by the same overland and river route Cullen had followed in 1832, and returning by Great Lakes steamer to Buffalo and a combination of railway, stage coach, and Hudson River. During his western visit Bryant resumed a practice begun in Europe of sending accounts of his journeys to his newspaper, a custom he continued thereafter when traveling any considerable distance from home. That fall the Bryants visited Dana on Cape Ann, Massachusetts, enjoying their brief stay at the seaside so much that in 1842 they spent three weeks at Pigeon Cove nearby.

Poetry, until lately submerged in Bryant's concern with his newspaper, gradually re-emerged. Starting with "The Battle-field" in the first number of
the Democratic Review in October 1837, he contributed eight poems to that periodical during the next four years, as well as two to the Knickerbocker. In May 1842 he agreed to write exclusively for Graham's Magazine at $50 a poem, a commitment he kept with few exceptions for more than a decade. In 1839 the Harpers had brought out another edition of his collected poetry which, though containing only one new poem, drew much favorable comment. And in 1842, with the publication of The Fountain and Other Poems, all composed since his return from Europe, Bryant re-established the reputation he had nearly let slip away by his silence. His new collection was greeted with "fervent admiration" by Lewis Gaylord Clark of the Knickerbocker, who declared his belief that "Mr. Bryant is not only the very first of American poets, but, . . . with perhaps one eminent living exception, he is the first living poet in the world."

Bryant found some leisure at this time for other literary activities. In the summer of 1840 he put together for the Harpers' Family Library an anthology of poems by seventy-eight Americans since the time of Philip Freneau—not, he intimated to Dana, a task in which he took much pride, since "I suppose I might have made it a hundred, for after you get beyond about half a dozen, where are you to stop?" but one for which he earned a welcome $500. More rewarding was his success that summer, after over a year's effort, in persuading the Harper brothers to publish Richard Henry Dana, Jr.'s Two Years Before the Mast. He reviewed the book at some length in the Democratic Review, and noticed it in the Evening Post, where he had begun to give considerable space to new publications, to visiting lecturers such as Dana, Emerson, and Longfellow, and to the works of Audubon, Andrew Jackson Downing, and the artists of the National Academy of Design. Between 1838 and 1843 he opened his news columns to a long series of letters from James Fenimore Cooper concerning the libel suits which that litigious novelist was then prosecuting against a number of hostile journalists. He repeatedly urged the necessity for an equitable international copyright agreement, a cause to which he gave effective support when Charles Dickens asked him to publicize a petition to the American Congress from leading British writers, which Dickens brought with him to New York early in 1842.

Bryant was much impressed by Dickens, already enormously popular in America. With Irving, Halleck, and other writers, he attended a public dinner for the English novelist, and they met more intimately several times at breakfast and dinner, as well as at the Bryants' home. Bryant liked Dickens "hugely," he told Dana; he thought the novelist had earned the honest admiration of ordinary Americans by finding "subjects of thrilling interest in the passions, sufferings, and virtues of the mass."

By 1842 Bryant had achieved high rank in the nation as a political journalist. Friendly critics spoke of his "masterly political essays," written in a "manly, fearless, independent style," while one journalistic adversary charged that he "always begins his editorials with a stale joke and ends them with a fresh lie." No doubt this complaint was provoked by what one admirer called Bryant's "happy faculty in illustrating to the most careless reader a difficult argument by an apposite anecdote" drawn from a mind filled with "varied lore," and another "the indulgence of his wit, which often flashed like summer lightning through the dark clouds of debate." Parke Godwin wrote later that his employer "could be trenchant, almost cruel at times—his hatred of pretence and
wrong being most intense—but his prevailing moods were gentle, and he preferred to ridicule sham and injustice to denouncing them in bitter and truculent words.” Godwin recalled a “late eminent judge of federal politics” who “could not tell whether he hated or admired the Evening Post the more—for while he detested its inculcations, he was charmed by the beauty and vigor of its style.” There are many examples of the deft use of homely anecdote or literary allusion in Bryant’s editorials of this period. In an article which charged the federal government with a constitutional subterfuge in its plan to lend rather than give its surplus revenue to the states, he began, “‘Sir,’ said Dr. Johnson to a Thames waterman, ‘Your wife, under pretense of keeping a house of ill-fame, is a receiver of stolen goods.’” In another editorial, having remarked that all the opposition papers in New York railed daily at his own with the “eloquence of ten fisher-women,” he said he had no time to listen to scolding, and concluded, “There is an honest shoemaker living at Naples whose little dog comes out every morning and barks at Vesuvius.” When some Whig newspapers attacked Senator John C. Calhoun for advocating the separation of the government from private banking, Bryant taunted them, “It is surprising how suddenly the dimensions of Mr. Calhoun’s intellectual stature are reduced in the estimation of certain persons. The other day he towered to a height like that of Milton’s arch-fiend when he prepared to do battle with Ithuriel. At present . . . he is shrunk to a size no larger than that of the same personage when he lay ‘squat at the ear of Eve.’” Noting one day that Senator Henry Clay had decided once more not to retire from politics, Bryant said glibly of this statesman, who was known to enjoy gambling and drink, “An old and practiced politician, particularly if he have looked upon politics as a mere game of skill, which Mr. Clay appears to do, never goes willingly into private life. He keeps his seat at the table till the cards are taken from his hand. He wields the cue till the keeper of the billiard-room disengages it from his fingers and tells him that it is another gentleman’s turn to play. He forswears the dice-box, as many a gamester has done before him, and the next hour he is seen rattling it as eagerly as ever. . . . Politics are to such a man his daily stimulus, his alcohol, his opium, without which he is in the depths of wretchedness.”

After the Whigs had won city and state elections in New York in 1838, and two years later put their candidate William Henry Harrison into the White House by the notorious “Log Cabin and Hard Cider” campaign, the retiring Democratic Secretary of the Navy James Kirke Paulding, an occasional writer for the Evening Post, said to Bryant, “You have fought ably, nobly, and virtuously, for the good cause, which is not lost but only mislaid for a while, I hope and trust.”

In the spring or early summer of 1842 Bryant, tired of the city, and attracted by the experience of his holiday with Dana on the Massachusetts shore, found a house and property to his liking at Hempstead Harbor on Long Island, about twenty-five miles east of New York City. Discouraged, however, by a brief business decline and an abnormal expenditure from his newspaper’s income, he told the property’s owner, Joseph Moulton, in September that he should have to forgo its purchase for the time being. But within three months he managed to change his mind again, and on December 28th he contracted to buy Moulton’s house and the farm on which it stood.
371. To Cyrus Bryant

New York Jan 8, 1839.

Dear Brother

I was somewhat surprised to learn from John the other day that you and he had not given each other while I was in Europe promissory notes for the amount of money you had received of me. I thought that it was well understood that this should be done, in order that there might be no mistake in case any of us should go out of the world. I cannot, however, tell whether I spoke to you on the subject or wrote to him. It is not too late, luckily, to take the business out of the slovenly train in which it now is. I have no note of yours, except one for $67.50 given on the 1st of May 1834. There is the money which I put into your hands when you set out for the west, and there is also the money which you have received from John, for all which I have nothing to shew. Will you be so good as to write to me as soon as you receive this, and send me your promissory note for the amount. I am much poorer than I was when I saw you last, and should be glad to have the evidence of what little I may possess in such a situation that I can see it. Of course I do not blame any body in the matter. I have now been in the country more than two years and should have inquired into the matter before.—

I hear with great pleasure that you are prosperous. Edward Harte tells me that you are "a rich man." I do not suppose that this is exactly so, but I hope you possess a competency. With me times have gone hard since my return. I sometimes thought that I should be obliged to give up the Evening Post—in short to discontinue the paper and go out into the world again loaded with a debt too large to leave me any hope of ever discharging it. I have weathered the storm, however, and the sky now begins to brighten, though I am far from being in the situation I was when I went to Europe.8

My regards to your wife and to all my friends in Illinois and believe me

Yours affectionately

W. C. BRYANT

[by Frances Bryant]

Dear Brother

I wish you would write me a letter. I cannot think why you never write to us. I should like to know how you live, and what is going on among you—and above all tell me about your children, are they smart and handsome—and are you not going to bring your wife into this part of the world soon? If you do, be sure and bring her here. I am sorry that I cannot write more, but the bearer of this goes tomorrow and we did not know until this evening of the oppty. —William gets no time to
write anything only what he writes for the paper. It is now bed time so
good night. My respects [to] your wife.

Y[ours] truly
FRANCES.

Quarterly, 10 (June 1937), 354.

1. Cullen had lent this money to his next younger brother at the time of Cyrus'
mariage. See Letter 280.
2. Edward Harte, Eliza Robbins' nephew, joined the staff of the EP at about
this time; by 1843 he had become the paper's Washington correspondent. See Letter
450.
3. The EP dividends for the year ending November 16, 1838, had totaled $5,013.13,
an increase of nearly $2,800 over the previous year. “Evening Post Accounts,”
NYPL-GR.
4. At this time Cyrus and Julia (Everett) Bryant had two children: Everett, 3½,
and Peter, 1½ years.

372. To Churchill C. Cambreleng

Dear Sir.

I write this letter on behalf of Miss Sands whom I believe you know
very well. The assignees of her late father have in their hands a consider-
able sum of money, which they would be glad to pay over to her if fully
authorized, and the creditors are all willing, and have signed a release,
with the exception of three who cannot be found. As I understand the
matter, the Commissioners of Bankruptcy under the act of Congress of
1800, must, therefore, direct the assignees to pay over the money, or
it cannot be done.

Under that act, the president of the United States was authorized to
appoint a certain number of Commissioners of Bankruptcy for each state
in the Union, out of whom the District Judge, in each case of bank-
ruptcy, was to select the persons who were to act in that case.

President Jefferson in April 1802 appointed eight or nine Com-
missioners for this state. Mr. Sands, the father, failed about that time and
before the repeal of the act. The commissioners of bankruptcy who were
to act in his case were named by the District Court. Being a bankrupt
under the act of 1800 this estate of course must be settled according to
the terms of that act.

Miss Sands having arranged matters with all the creditors she could
find, so as to save a little from the wreck of her father's fortune, and
being desirous of bringing this long standing case of bankruptcy to a
conclusion, found that the Commissioners authorized by the District
Court to act in that case, were dead. She then applied to the Court to
name others, but on further inquiry it was discovered that all the Commissioners appointed by Mr. Jefferson for this state in 1802 were dead, the last having died a year ago. Judge Betts\(^3\) told her that he could not go out of the list appointed by Mr. Jefferson, and advised her to apply to Mr. Van Buren to appoint a new set of Commissioners for this state to complete any unfinished business remaining under the act of 1800.

Mr. Van Buren was applied to not long since. He referred the matter to the Attorney General\(^4\) who, as I am told, being ill, and supposing that a special appointment of Commissioners was wanted in a particular case, gave a hasty opinion that the President had not the power.

This is as much as to say that no business begun under the act of 1800 can be finished, but must remain open till doomsday—that the creditors can never get their dividends nor the bankrupt his surplus, but that the assignees are to have and to hold and enjoy the property forever.

Judge Betts I am told is clear that the appointment can be made and so is Judge Thompson.\(^5\) The President might do it without further consultation with the Attorney General, provided its equity and necessity appears to him in the same light as to us. The nominations are not sent to the Senate and there is no need of publishing them in the newspapers. No opposition is made to the step by any body concerned, but all who can be found after the most diligent search, are anxious that it should be taken. All that is wanted is that Stephen Cambreleng, John Slosson, Thomas L. Ogden, Lorenzo Hoyt and John D. Campbell be appointed Commissioners to settle any unfinished business in this state under the bankrupt act of 1800. Of course any others may be appointed, but these gentlemen are already acquainted with the case.

Judge Betts has recommended that you should be written to on this subject. May we rely on your kindness to represent the matter to the President? He will see, I think, the reasonableness of the request and the extreme hardship of the case if it is not granted.

I am sir

Very sincerely yours

Wm C Bryant

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**Manuscript:** DuU

**Address:** Hon. C. C. Cambreleng / Member of Congress / Washington / D. C.

**Postmark:** NEW-YORK / FEB / 14

**Docketed:** W. C. Bryant to Mr. / Cambreleng Feby. 18th 1839.

1. Congressman Cambreleng, then in the last year of his long service as majority leader of the House of Representatives during the Jackson and Van Buren administrations, was appointed minister to Russia in 1840. See 199.2.

2. Comfort Sands (1748–1834), father of Bryant's intimate friends Julia and her late brother Robert Sands, had been a prosperous New York merchant during the Revolution, when he was a member of the New York Committee of Public Safety, and the state constitutional convention. In 1784 he was a founder of the Bank of New York, and was president of the Chamber of Commerce, 1794–1798.

373. To Richard H. Dana

New York March 25 1839.

My dear Sir

You say nothing, in your letter of the 1st instant, about coming to New York this spring. Perhaps a journey in this mild and dry weather would do you good. Whenever you get ready for your long postponed visit to New York think of my house as your caravanserai.

I agree with you in regard to this plan of a series of American poets. Besides the poor figure we cut when seen by ourselves is it not a contrivance to get off the works of the obscure writers? When the cripples and the sound in limb are made to walk arm in arm, in a platoon, they must all go forward at the same pace. The burden of helping forward the lame is put upon the sound who are kept back by it in the same proportion.

Before I received your letter I had mentioned to Mr. Colman the titles of two or three of your poems, either of which I thought would do for the miscellany he proposes to publish. I believe that “Day Break” was not among the number, but it should have been. In regard to Mr. Dawes’ poems I am doubtful from what I know of your taste in such matters whether you would read his volume if you were to get it. Yet you have leisure, and perhaps you would find that I who am obliged to look over such things in a hurry have misjudged.

I see the Sedgwicks now and then. Mr. [Robert] Sedgwick’s health improves, certainly; but by very slow degrees. I do not suppose that an entire recovery is to be hoped for. He is to try travelling in Europe this spring. Mrs. Sedgwick and his sister go out with him, their eldest daughter too, and perhaps one or two of the other children. The beginning of May is fixed upon for the voyage.

We have become as great lecture goers here, almost as you in Boston. The theatres are empty. The Park Theatre so thronged formerly sits solitary, and the fashionables resort in crowds to lectures and concerts. Sometimes a light kind of lecture before the Historical Society has to be repeated such is the number of people who cannot obtain entrance the first evening. If you lived in New York you would be surprised to see of how slight stuff a great man may be made. No matter—there is no forcing of the conscience in these matters here. You are not obliged to acknowledge the greatness of the temporary favorite, if you do not choose, as I am told you are expected to do in Boston.
What you heard of an attachment upon the property of the New
York University is, I presume, not true. It is deep in debt or has been
so but great efforts are making to get it out, and I heard the other day of
thirty or forty thousand dollars subscribed for the purpose. Dr. Mathews
is an indifferent scholar and a dull preacher, but he has a wonderful
knack at raising money.\(^5\)

Cooper is at Philadelphia writing, I hear, a Naval history of the
United States.\(^6\) Verplanck is at Albany in the State Senate playing the
politician. A letter from Halleck was published the other day in a weekly
print the editor of which had pestered him for a poetical contribution, in
which he says that he has forsworn the writing of poetry. Dunlap has had
another attack of paralysis. Hillhouse has published a little poem in a
pamphlet entitled Sachem's Wood.\(^7\) I am astonished that he could have
written any thing so bad.

Mrs. Bryant desires her compliments and tells me to say to you that
she has been disappointed in not seeing you in New York and at her
house before now.

Yrs truly

W C BRYANT

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1. Unrecovered.
2. Probably Dana had referred to Carey & Hart's forthcoming anthology *The Poets and Poetry of America* (Philadelphia, 1842), for which the compiler Rufus Griswold would soon be collecting material.

374. To Martin Van Buren

Office of the Evening Post
New York April 27 1839.

Sir

Mr. Butler communicated to me the other day in answer to an applica-
tion made by myself and several others in behalf of Mr. Leggett,\(^1\) that
a confidential agent was about to be sent to Central America to procure
the ratification of a certain treaty and make certain explanations to the
government of that country—and this appointment I understand was
offered to Mr. Leggett.
I beg leave to express a hope that the administration have not yet positively determined that the person who is to go out to close the affairs of Mr. De Witt's mission shall not, for the time he is employed, be a chargé d'affaires. The question of national comity—whether it would be infringed or not by sending out a person in an inferior capacity to complete the mission of a chargé is one on which I do not presume to speak. But I understand from a paragraph in the Globe that Mr. De Witt was to have returned to Central America in the same capacity in which he had formerly acted. Is there not then a fitness in giving his successor, though temporarily employed, the same rank? He must perform the duty of a chargé d'affaires; is it not proper therefore that he should be allowed the compensation which belongs to the place? It is true that Mr. De Witt would not have been paid another outfit, but neither had he any pretext to claim it having returned to this country solely for his own convenience. 2

The reason for sending out a person in an inferior capacity to that in which Mr. De Witt was employed, I suppose, is to avoid the payment of the outfit. But unfortunately the outfit is of the utmost consequence to Mr. Legget. He has contracted obligations, which in his view will not permit him to leave the country with honour until they are discharged.

My apology for giving you this trouble is, that I write in behalf of a most meritorious individual, in whom a large number of persons in this community take a strong interest, but the ease of whose pecuniary circumstances bears no proportion to his deserts. I hope that on a consideration of the subject, it will appear that however weighty may be the economical reasons to the contrary, they are outweighed by the propriety of completing Mr. De Witts mission by a person employed in the same capacity. 3 I am Sir

with the greatest respect,
Yr obt Servt

WM C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: Van Buren Papers, LC ADDRESS: His Excy M. Van Buren.

1. Benjamin Franklin Butler (1795–1858), law partner and intimate friend of President Van Buren's, and briefly Attorney General in his cabinet, was now United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York. The application to which Bryant refers is unrecovered.

2. Charles Gerrit De Witt (1789–1839), a member of Congress from New York, 1828–1831, was chargé d'affaires in Central America from 1833 until February 1839, when he returned home because of illness. BDAC.

3. At the end of September 1837 William Leggett's two newspapers, The Plaindealer and The Examiner, had failed, leaving him deeply in debt and in poor health. For a year his devoted friend Edwin Forrest supported Leggett and his wife, Elmira, helping to pay their debts and eventually buying them a house, "Aylemere," in Mrs. Leggett's home town, New Rochelle, New York. Several of Leggett's friends tried to re-establish The Plaindealer, hoping he would recover his health; others nearly
managed to get him the Democratic nomination for Congress in the fall of 1838. Bryant wrote a biographical article on his friend and former partner for the Democratic Review, and, as this letter indicates, tried to get him the diplomatic mission to Guatemala, the capital of the Central American Federation. Van Buren agreed in a letter to Bryant to send Leggett as a confidential agent on better financial terms than he could command as a chargé d'affaires, but argued that the title would be impolitic. Leggett accepted the appointment, and was getting ready to leave for Central America when, on May 29, he died from an acute attack of colic. Proctor, "Leggett," pp. 243–244; Schlesinger, Age of Jackson, p. 260; Van Buren to Bryant, May 1, 1839, Van Buren Papers, LC; Leggett to unidentified correspondent, October 24, 1838, in A Collection of the Political Writings of William Leggett, selected and arranged with a preface, by Theodore Sedgwick, Jr., 2 vols. (New York, 1840), II, 335–336; Leggett to James G. Birney, November 22, 1838, in Letters of James Gillespie Birney, 1831–1857, ed. Dwight L. Dumond, 2 vols. (New York: Appleton-Century, 1938), I, 476–478.

Although Leggett had been exoriated during his lifetime by opponents of his fiery radicalism, in death he was enshrined in the minds of radical reformers as one who, Bryant wrote in an epitaph for his friend’s monument, “loved truth for its own sake . . . and raised his voice against all injustice on whomsoever committed and whoever were its authors.” Whittier celebrated Leggett’s “free and honest thought, / The angel utterance of an upright mind,” and Walt Whitman called him “the glorious Leggett.” Bryant’s biographical essay, written before Leggett’s death, appeared in the Democratic Review, 6 (July 1839), 17–28, and in November, in the same magazine, his poetic tribute, “In Memory of William Leggett”:

“. . . The words of fire that from his pen
   Were flung upon the fervid page
   Still move, still shake the hearts of men,
   Amid a cold and coward age.
   “His love of truth, too warm, too strong
   For Hope or Fear to chain or chill,
   His hate of tyranny and wrong,
   Burn in the breasts he kindled still . . .”

(Poems [1876], pp. 278–279).


375. To Richard H. Dana

New York  June 24  1839.

My dear sir.

I am sorry that I have no better account to give of my success in the commission with which you entrusted me.¹ I have seen the Harpers and do not find them disposed to publish the book at all at present. Three of the brothers were together—there are four of them in all—and the one who had the conversation with Mr. Woods,² after saying a few words went out. The others then told me that James Harper, who had made the offer to Mr. Woods, had never laid the matter before them, that they did not object to the book, that they had no doubt a publisher might be
found for it &c &c. and said that the best way would be for me to write to you and advise, that since two chapters are to be written, the author should finish the work and offer it to them or to Carey Lea and Blanchard of Philadelphia in the autumn. I told them that the two chapters might be written off hand, that the work was in fact finished already and that I had come to make final terms with them, if they were ready to publish it. They then answered that they were engaged with so many publications at present, some new but the principal part their old publications which are stereotyped, that really they could not engage to get out your son’s work at present; they thought they should be very glad to do it in the autumn, but could not now make any bargain to that effect. They had no doubt the work was an excellent work &c. &c. In short after making them reduce their circumlocutions to plain language I found that they were not disposed either to publish the book now or to stipulate for doing it hereafter.

I have not applied to any other booksellers, but will do so if you wish it. The Harpers by no means do so large a business in this way as formerly—the publication of new books in this city is divided among a greater number of persons, but they have still great opportunities of getting off large editions. The arrangement which James Harper offered to make with Mr. Woods was 10 per cent on the sales, not on the profits, of the first edition after 1000 had been sold. I enquired how large an edition would have been printed and was told probably 2000. I asked what your son’s share would amount to on a copy and was told about 12½ cents. At that rate supposing the 2000 copies to have been sold, your son would have received 125 dollars. This as you say is not much for a successful work, but even this I cannot get for you. If you think proper I will apply to Colman [nd] to Appleton. Neither of these persons however have such means of ensuring a sale for their publications as some of the Philadelphia booksellers.

I like the book extremely and think it will take with the [public. I like?] its picturesque simplicity—the power which the writer has of producing effect without aiming at it, and I am very sure the public will like it too. It is something novel also the life of a sailor before the mast, unaffectedly and intelligently described; the work will succeed I have no doubt.

Yrs. truly,

W C Bryant

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR
ADDRESS: Richard H. Dana Esq / Boston
POSTMARK: NEW YORK / JUN / 25
ENDORSED: Wm C. Bryant / June 24—39. Ans. / July 9—.

1. Bryant’s efforts, begun here, to secure a publisher for Richard Henry Dana, Jr.’s narrative of his adventures as a common sailor, were continued with unceasing per-
sistence until its publication fifteen months later by the Harpers as *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840).

2. Dana's friend Leonard Woods (262.2) had left young Dana's manuscript with the Harpers on May 14, with the stipulation that Bryant should read it and give his opinion of its worth as a book. This was done, and the Harpers offered the author through Woods 10% of the profits after the first 1,000 copies—an offer which the elder Dana characterized in a letter to Bryant on June 12 as "hard upon the next door to nothing," Exman, *Brothers Harper*, p. 127; Robert F. Metzdorf, "The Publishing History of Richard Henry Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast,*" *Harvard Library Bulletin*, 7 (1953), 315-316.

376. *To Fanny Bryant*

New York July 2d 1839.

Dear Fanny,

I am glad to hear that you pass your time so pleasantly at Presqu’isle,¹ though I knew that it could not be otherwise. Return your mother’s thanks and mine to the hospitable inmates of that beautiful spot for their kind invitation, and say that Mrs. Bryant being somewhat indisposed, will not be able to come up, but if the weather permit, I will bring up Julia tomorrow to pass the fourth of July and return on Friday.

Your mother got home on Saturday morning quite worn out with a hard visit—exhausted with trotting about and talking, and absolutely in need of quiet and repose to restore her.

Yrs affectionately—

W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR ADDRESS: Miss Fanny Bryant / Care of Mr. Denning / Fishkill.


377. *To Julia S. Bryant*

Nuova Jorca li 21 Agosto, 1839.

Cara mia Giulina.

Mi si dice che tu sei contentissima a Barrington, e me ne rallegra. Spero che tornerai più sana, più robusta e più allegra.

Sai tu che abbiamo perduto il nostro gallino? Ha montato il poverino sul muro del nostro cortile ed è andato via non so dove. Abbiamo un altro, che Maria ha trovato nella strada, non tanto bello, è vero, ma non brutto.

Non so se verrò o no a Barrington. Spero di vederti fra poche settimane a Nuova Jorca. Le persiche nel nostro giardino cominciano già a
rosseggiaire e maturare per la tua bocchetta. Mi pare che dicono, —dov'è Giulina? Se non viene presto saremo mangiate d'altrui, e ciò sarebbe pecatto.

T'abbraccio di cuore.¹

GUGLIELMO C. BRYANT


1. "My dear little Julia. I am told that you are very happy at Barrington, and I am delighted to hear it. I hope you will come back healthier, stronger, and more cheerful. Do you know that we have lost our little rooster? The poor thing climbed onto the wall of our dooryard and went off I know not where. We have another one that Maria has found in the street, not so handsome, it is true, but not ugly either. I do not know whether or not I shall come to Barrington. I hope to see you in a few weeks in New York. The peaches in our garden already begin to take on a rosy hue and to ripen for your little mouth. It seems to me they are saying—where is little Julia? If she does not come soon we shall be eaten up by others and that would be a pity. I embrace you with all my heart."

378. To Fanny Bryant


Dear Fanny

I am glad to hear that you are so well amused during your stay in Great Barrington. As you say nothing of your health in your last letter,² we take it for granted that the little indisposition which you had at first is over. You complain of the chilliness of the atmosphere. You know my remedy in such a case—exercise. I am much pleased to hear that you take Julia about with you so much.

The other day while at Oyster Bay I took a walk to Ronconcuma pond or lake, about thirty miles distant, in the middle of the island. It is situated in the midst of a tract of forest a considerable part of which is dwarf oak. In this wild and desolate tract range great numbers of deer which at certain seasons are hunted. I passed the night at a little tavern near the lake and we had vension for supper. The landlord had been out with his hounds and killed a deer that morning. The lake is a clear basin of sweet water, without any outlet—a great natural well with bold gravelly banks, a beach of pure white sand and a clean sandy bottom. It is three miles in circumference. I went the next morning four miles and a half through the woods to Smithtown, and thence in the stage coach to Hicksville from which I walked in to Oyster Bay.—

Write to me. Spell your letters a little more carefully. My regards to Mr. and Mrs. Henderson, and Hannah and James.

Yrs truly

W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR ADDRESS: Miss Fanny Bryant / Great Barrington / Mass.
Dear Fanny

Your letter of Thursday morning to your mother has just arrived,¹ and as I have an opportunity to write by Mr. Gustavus Hopkins, and shall not previously see your mother, I have opened it to see if there was any thing in it which required an immediate answer. I find that your Aunt Henderson is coming down next week if it is not too warm. Your mother has written to you advising you to come down next week if it should continue cool. Whether you will think that her coming should be a reason for your remaining I cannot judge. I hardly think it need be; but I leave this to you. The season for hot weather is over and we can hardly have any thing more than two or three warm days.

I send you some money, so that you may be prepared to come down the first opportunity, or whenever the whim takes you. It is now the season for fruit—we have peaches, melons of both kinds, plums and pears in abundance. The peach tree in our yard nearest the cistern has produced some very fine fruit, which is now in its perfection, but I suppose it will hardly keep till you come down. The other which has the most fruit is later, and I hope it will not be ripe for some time to come, so that you and Julia may have a chance at it. The grapes begin to change colour a little but they will not be ripe so early as last year. The amount inclosed you is six dollars. I believe you have something by you. Your mother will be very much pleased to see Mrs. Henderson and Marie here. My regards to your uncle and aunt.

Yrs affectionately

W. C. Bryant

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR ADDRESS: Miss Fanny Bryant / Great Barrington / Massachusetts / fvd. by Mr. Hopkins.

1. Unrecovered.
they were of a nature of the success of which they could not doubt." Books of voyages and travels, they added, do not often pay the publisher much less the author. Finally, with an apology for offering their advice, they say that in their opinion the best thing Mr. Dana can do is "to find some publisher in Boston where his family connexion is so well known, who would undertake its publication, and pay to Mr. Dana one half of the profits if the book should succeed."

I now determined to try the New York booksellers. Wiley & Putnam declined it on account of the nature of their business, which they said was of late almost wholly confined to the importation of books, leaving their publication to others. I asked his advice as to whom I should apply. He said that Samuel Colman was as likely to consent to become the publisher as any body he could think of. Colman is the publisher of Longfellow's Hyperion, of a new translation of Undine, of Dawes's poems, and of half a dozen works, which I am astonished should have had the luck to find any publisher at all.

I knew that Colman had been the agent of the Boston "Stationer's Company" I think they called it, which failed not long ago, and I supposed that he was not well provided with capital. On inquiry, however, I was told that he had "good backers."

To Colman therefore, I went, and stated to him the plan of the work, and its prospects of success. He seemed pleased with the idea of publishing the work and promised to take the matter into consideration and confer with me at another time. I called at his shop repeatedly but could not find him at home. At last I found him just returned from a journey. He told me that his willingness to publish the book was no less than when I spoke with him, but that the hard times and dull sales obliged him to decline all new engagements. No bookseller he said would now consent to publish a work not written by a person of established reputation, and therefore sure of a sale. He thought it would be of no use to apply to any body else at present and hoped that if Mr. Dana did not find an immediate publisher, and should by and by become induced by a change of times to offer his work to any body again, he would think of him.

I am very sorry that what I have attempted has been so little successful. I am convinced however that this is owing to the general dulness of business. If Mr. Leonard Woods had been authorized and had thought proper to conclude a bargain with the Harpers when he was in town I have no doubt he might have done so, though they would have postponed the publication as long as the terms of the agreement could by any stretching be made to allow. But when I saw them they already began to be pinched by the times and were glad to get rid of any thing that did not amount to a positive engagement. I see no prospect of times becoming better till next Spring at least. The whole world of commerce, at
home and abroad, is suffering a kind of dry bellyache. Mr. Niles who negotiated a treaty lately with Sardinia, and who came home the other day full of commercial learning and political economy says that it is because all the gold and silver is going to Spain where nobody will give his neighbour five minutes credit for a single maravedi. Whether this be so or not nobody here looks for a better state of things until a few failures have taken place.

Do you not mean to come to New York this fall? The weather is now fine; you can come on without much fatigue, and my house is open to you. Remember me to your son and daughter, and tell your son how much I regret that I could be of no service to him.

Yrs truly
W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR
ADDRESS: Richard H. Dana Esq. / Boston

1. Neither letter has been recovered.
2. Undine (1811), a fairy romance in German, was written by Friedrich, Baron de la Motte Fouqué (1777–1843).
3. In 1838 Dr. Nathaniel Niles (1791–1869) arranged a commercial treaty with the Kingdom of Sardinia, which then included much of northern Italy as well as Sicily. In 1848–1850 he was United States chargé d'affaires in that country.
4. An old Spanish copper coin then worth about one-third of an American cent.

381. To Messrs. William B. Lawrence and Others

Gentlemen.

I am by no means insensible to the honor you do me in requesting me to deliver an address before the members of your respectable institution.

My present engagements, I regret to say, allow me no alternative but to decline the invitation.

I am gentlemen with great respect
Your obedient Servt.
W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYHS

1. William Beach Lawrence (1800–1881), a writer on international law, was first vice president of the New-York Historical Society. The other addressees were Samuel Ward, Jr. (see 324.10); George Folsom (1802–1869), a lawyer and antiquarian; and George Gibbs (1815–1873, Harvard 1838), an Indian scholar. All were officers of the Historical Society. Vail, Knickerbocker Birthday, pp. 70–71, 86, 382.
2. Since this invitation is unrecovered, the nature and purpose of Bryant's proposed address are not clear. But see Bryant's comment on the popularity of lectures at the New-York Historical Society (Letter 373). The series of 1838 was so popular that another series of eight was given in 1839. Vail, *Knickerbocker Birthday*, p. 80.

382. *To Stephen Cambreleng*¹

Office of the Evening Post

Dear Sir.

Knowing that you sometimes have money in your hands for the purpose of placing out, and having occasion for about two thousand dollars to be employed for a purpose of considerable importance to the Evening Post establishment, I venture to make application to you. We can give you the note of the firm, a note which was never dishonoured and never renewed, and satisfactory indorsers. The money is wanted for six months. Mr. Boggs the bearer of this will explain to you more fully the object of the loan, and the security we are able to give.²

Yours truly
W. C. BRYANT


1. Stephen Cambreleng, a lawyer with offices at 43 Liberty Street, was a leading New York Democrat, and a Master in the Court of Chancery. He was later appointed a Commissioner in Bankruptcy (as Bryant had suggested in Letter 372). Longworth's New York Directory, 1836–1837.

2. There is no indication in the "*Evening Post Accounts"* (NYPL-GR) that Cambreleng provided the desired funds. The object of Bryant's solicitation seems clear, however; on October 19 Hetty Coleman, widow of the *EP* founding editor, finally withdrew from partial ownership of the newspaper. There is a suggestion in the "*Evening Post Accounts"* for November 16, 1839, that the money needed to buy Mrs. Coleman out came from Edwin Forrest. See *EP*, February 8, 1840.

383. *To James A. Hillhouse*

New York  March 17  1840

My dear Sir

The bearer of this letter is Mr. Dana of Boston, the poet whom of course you will be glad to know.

He has proved the most popular of our public lecturers this winter, and the people of New Haven would procure themselves a great pleasure, if they would ask him to give them even a single lecture before the[y] allow him to proceed on his way home.¹

My compliments to Mrs. Hillhouse and to the young lady whom I remember, the miniature I suppose, of what she is now.

Yrs truly
W. C. BRYANT
1. In the winter of 1839–1840 Dana gave a series of eight lectures on Shakespeare, first in Boston, then in New York, and finally at Philadelphia. On January 2 or 3 he came from Boston to New York on the Long Island Sound steamboat *Lexington*, which caught fire briefly that night, and ten days later, with 150 passengers and a deck load of cotton, burned and sank with the loss of all but one passenger. The tragedy impelled Bryant to renew his often repeated editorial demands for stricter supervision of safety precautions in steamboat travel. *EP*, January 16, 18, 1840.

Bryant commented favorably in the *EP* on Dana’s lectures given at the Stuyvesant Institute on January 14, and successively until February 6, when it was announced that the series was so popular that it would be repeated at New York University. Longfellow was lecturing in New York concurrently on Dante and Molière; sometime during their stay Bryant apparently entertained the two lecturers at dinner, together with Fitz-Greene Halleck. *Life*, I, 376–377; Longfellow, *Letters*, II, 197, 203, 209–211. Presumably, Bryant succeeded through Hillhouse in getting Dana a lecture engagement in New Haven; see Letter 386.

384. To Ferdinand E. Field

New York, May 6, 1840.

... I regret exceedingly to hear that you have suffered lately from ill health. We must have you out again to America for the benefit of the air.¹ I agree with Mr. Cooper in his last novel, "The Pathfinder"²—which, by the way, I like very much, particularly the concluding part—that the climate of America, although it is the fashion to find fault with it, is as good as any climate, and better than many. Another walk on the Palisades would put you to rights again, for a week at least. Or you might go with me, where I went three weeks since, to Bethlehem, a beautiful little town inhabited by Moravians, twelve miles west of Easton, in Pennsylvania. Mr. Parker accompanied me. You would have been delighted with the place, its appearance of thrift, its neat habitations, its orderly population, even to the boys in the streets, its charming situation on a hill sloping down to the Lehigh, its broad, shallow, rapid river, with firm, dry shores, bordered with forest-trees, and shagged here and there with thickets of the kalmia and rhododendron. Along the banks are beautiful shaded walks, leading to a great distance, and near the town is a little island covered with ancient trees of immense size, and carpeted with green turf, whither the people of the place repair to celebrate, after the German manner, their birthday festivals. On our return we walked to Easton along the Lehigh, among rich farms and beautiful hills and groves. Easton we only saw in the evening, but it appeared to be situated in a very picturesque country. From the bridge over the Delaware we had one of the most glorious moonlight views I ever beheld. But I suppose Mr. Parker has written you all about our excursion.³

We have left the house in Carmine Street, after inhabiting it for two years and a half, and have taken a house in Ninth Street, near the Sixth Avenue, not far from Brevoort’s house, which you remember,
doubtless, a kind of palace in a Garden. Our little dwelling is a comfortable two-story house, quite new and very convenient. . . . In most other respects the world goes on much as it did when you were here. The greatest change that I perceive in New York is the introduction of cabs and mustachios, and in some instances beards as long as those worn by the Dunkers. As I advance in life the world widens in some respects and contracts in others; I have more acquaintances and fewer intimates. But I begin to moralize, and, for fear of being tiresome, as well as because I am at the end of my sheet, I will stop short. . . .


1. Sometime in 1839 Ferdinand Field had returned to Birmingham, England, to join his brother Alfred in the hardware export business.

2. [James Fenimore Cooper] The Path­finder; or, The Inland Sea (Philadelphia, 1840).

3. Reginald Parker, a London lawyer, had apparently been introduced to Bryant by Ferdinand Field. Life, I, 382.

4. On May 2, 1840, the Bryants moved from 12 Carmine Street to 326 Ninth Street, between Fifth and Sixth avenues. Frances Bryant, "Autobiographical Sketch," NYPL–GR. Henry Brevoort (1782–1848), literary dilettante and intimate friend of Irving, Halleck, and other New York writers, had inherited wealth as well as profited through association in the fur trade with John Jacob Astor. His mansion, built in 1834 at the corner of Ninth Street and Fifth Avenue, and probably designed by Alexander Jackson Davis, was torn down in 1925 to make way for a hotel. Nathan Silver, Lost New York (New York: Schocken [1971]), p. 117; Kendall B. Taft, Minor Knickerbockers: Representative Selections, With Introduction, Bibliography, and Notes (New York: American Book Company [1947]), p. 399.

385. To John Rand

New York May 8th, 1840.

My dear sir

I intended to write to you by Miss Robbins who went out a few days since in the packet ship St. James, but being then engaged in getting my household out of one house into another, I postponed it until the departure of the Great Western which I suppose will arrive in England as early as the St. James. I send out this letter to her expecting that she will put it into your hands.

You may perhaps know Miss Robbins as the author of some of the best school books that were ever written. I have been acquainted with her ever since my coming to New York, and there are few persons in whose society I take so much pleasure. I beg leave to recommend her to your kind attentions, with the assurance that any services you may render her will be so many obligations conferred on me.

When you last wrote me you were in some hesitation whether you should go to the continent or not. I would have written to you on the subject, but unluckily I did not know what to say to you. That you would
be delighted with contemplating the works of art with which Italy is filled. I knew very well and the sight of them would suggest hints that would not be lost on a mind like yours. But whether it would be prudent to give up the place you hold in the public estimation as a portrait painter, and Mr. Dodge your friend, assured me that it was a high one, and run the risk of recovering it on your return to England, was a matter of which I did not think myself competent to judge.

In this country the prospects of the artists are, as the chroniclers of the stock market would say, "dull" and "there is little doing." The poor fellows complain that nobody will sit for his portrait and that no orders are given for paintings in the other branches of the art. Nor is the public much to blame for this, for commerce is almost at a stand and there is scarcely any more circulation of money in the community than there is of blood in the veins of a dead man. You, who have known New York in better times can scarcely conceive of the blight which has fallen upon all activity and enterprise here. The reaction from the extravagant speculations and enterprises of 1835 and 1836 is yet going on, and the whole country suffers more or less by it. My own affairs after a long and hard struggle, are beginning, I hope, to mend.

My compliments to Mrs. Rand, and believe me as ever

truly yours

W. C. BRYANT

P.S. My family are all quite well, a circumstance which you will be glad to know. We have just moved into a new house in which we begin to find ourselves very comfortable. My wife who is sitting by me as I write desires her regards.

W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: University of California at Los Angeles Library Address: Mr. John Rand / London.

1. Parke Godwin remarked of Bryant's enjoyment of Eliza Robbins' society, "She was a person of extraordinary intellectual endowments. . . . Her knowledge was varied and accurate, particularly in the line of old English literature, and her ability to converse surpassed that of any person that I ever heard." But, he adds, "like all voluble talkers, she was at times given to 'words of learned length and thundering sound.'" Bryant—the exponent of simple clarity—often tried to tease her out of this propensity. Once, while visiting the Bryants, she took delivery for them of a chair which had been repaired, reporting to Bryant, "The mechanic has returned your chair, and expressed the hope that its equilibrium had been properly adjusted." "Did he say that," Bryant asked; "he never talked so to me; what did he really say?" "Well, if you must know," she conceded. "he said he guessed the rickety old concern wouldn't joggle any more." Life, I, 338–339.

2. Probably John Wood Dodge (1807–1898), a New York miniature portrait and diorama painter. DAA.

3. The semi-annual EP dividend for May 16, 1840, showed an increase of nearly 50% over that of a year earlier. "Evening Post Accounts," NYPL–GR. On March 30, announcing an enlargement of the paper from seven to eight columns, Bryant had
commented in a leading editorial that the "prejudices against it, with which its enemies had labored so vehemently to poison the minds of men of business, have been gradually overcome. . . . It is now seen that the doctrines which it has supported during all the madness of speculation, were sound and safe," and "it is but just that we should profit in turn by the restoration of reason to the community."

386. To Richard H. Dana

My dear sir

The newspapers say that you are at New Haven delivering your lectures. I think of coming up, and taking this occasion to look at the place in summer, which I have never yet done. If the weather is fair I shall set out in the Thursday morning's boat; if not, perhaps I shall come on Friday. I shall stay but a night or two.

You may think me negligent in attending to the business part of your letters. This is not so. When I received your letter informing me that you had heard nothing from the Harpers¹ although considerable time had elapsed I called on them immediately. They gave me some reason for the delay which I now forget, and assured me that they would go on with it immediately, and that your son would soon receive a proof. I thought that if he received information of what they were doing in this way, it would be more certain than any that I could communicate by letter.

The story you saw or heard of, in one of the weekly prints is an old affair of mine, written I believe nine years ago and published by the Harpers in a volume with some others.² I have done with writing tales for the present at least. You inquire whether we remain in the same house another year. We do not; we have got a new house, a very neat and convenient one, in Ninth Street, about a quarter of a mile from our old dwelling. Before the year is out for which we have taken it, you must come and judge of its accommodations. Fanny and Julia are busy in training the plants which they have sowed in the borders. Both are very well, and Julia enjoys her usual good spirits. We think the air much better than at the old place and the effect is favorable on all of us. My wife and I often talk of you and recollect your visit to New York as an agreeable interruption to the seclusion of our lives.³ I met Halleck the other day. He seems to have liked you very much and spoke of the pleasure he received from your conversation, although at that time his hearing was much more imperfect than usual.⁴ When I saw him the other day his deafness was hardly perceptible.

My wife, if she were with me and my daughters also would I have no doubt send you a great many compliments regards &c.⁵ If you are with Mr. Hillhouse or should see him before I come up, please to remember me to him and to Mrs. Hillhouse.

Yrs truly

WM C. BRYANT
1. Letter unrecovered.
2. This story, "The Skeleton's Cave," first published in Tales of Glauber-Spa in 1832, was reprinted in the weekly newspaper Brother Jonathan on April 18, 1840, with an introductory note saying that although Bryant is "our great national poet" whose verses have made his name known "wherever our language is spoken," his prose writings, "save to the few who read the masterly political essays of the Evening Post, are comparatively unknown. We present one of them—a simple tale, but beautiful and true to nature."
3. Dana seems to have spent at least a portion of his visit to New York in January and February under the Bryant roof. An unsubstantiated report suggests that Dana was not comfortable, and moved out to stay with another friend for the balance of his visit. In any case, subsequent correspondence reflects no diminution of cordiality between the poets.
4. At the dinner alluded to in 383.1.
5. The next day Frances Bryant wrote Dana a warm letter urging him to visit their home when his lectures in New Haven should be completed. Letter dated Wednesday [June 10, 1840], LH. Dana replied cordially on June 14 from New Haven, expressing pleasure at seeing her husband in New Haven, and regretting he was committed to an immediate return to Boston and a visit to New Bedford. Letter in NYPL–GR.

387. To Messrs. Joseph T. Buckingham and Others

New York June 22 1840

Gentlemen

I received this morning your invitation to attend a celebration of the four hundredth Anniversary of the Art of Printing.

I thank you for the honour you have done me, but my other engagements oblige me to decline it. Otherwise, I should be happy to join the enlightened community in which you live, in commemorating a discovery which has wrought such important changes in human society—changes yet going on in defiance of forms of government and undermining the institutions by which their progress is delayed.

I am, gentlemen,

with much respect and regard,

Yr. Obt. Servt.

Wm C. Bryant

1. Joseph Tinker Buckingham (1779–1861) founded and edited the Boston Courier, 1824–1848, and the New-England Magazine, 1831–1834. Of the other addressees, Charles Gordon Greene (1804–1886) established the Boston Morning Post in 1831 and edited it until 1875; Lynde M. Walter (1799–1842, Harvard 1817) founded the Boston Transcript in 1830; Nahum Capen (1804–1886) was a miscellaneous writer, and
later postmaster of Boston; Harrison Gray, a bookseller, had published the United States Review during Bryant's joint editorship in 1826–1827 (see 144.1); Joseph W. Ingraham (d. 1848) was a member of the Boston Board of Education. ACAB; Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism: A History of Newspapers in the United States Through 250 Years, 1690 to 1940 (New York: Macmillan, 1941), pp. 187, 217; Longfellow, Letters, I, 359; Hough, Biographical Notes.

2. Invitation unrecovered.

388. To Lyman C. Draper

Sir

We have "Gouge on Banking" at the office of the Evening Post. The price pr. hundred is $18—in single copies it is 25 cents. We have also published the following documents:

Col. Young's suppressed report on Internal Improvements at $2—pr. hundred.

Duncan's Speech on the Appropriation Bill at $2—pr hundred.

Walker's Speech on the Independent Treasury Bill at the same price.

We shall probably publish Young's fourth of July oration which will be sold at the rate of about 5 or 6 dollars a hundred—and Calhoun's letter to the Committee of the Democratic Convention of this city for the celebration of the Fourth of July, which will be afforded we suppose at $1—pr hundred.

In regard to the selection of a candidate for Governor, it belongs to a class of matters with which I meddle very little, unless I see a disposition to nominate some person whose opinions make him an improper candidate. Mr. [Benjamin F.] Butler would be a very popular candidate, but it is understood that he does not wish to be nominated. Wright would be universally popular with us. Young has a very strong and very zealous party, and if nominated would I have no doubt get a very strong vote in the city of New York. General Dix is also a great favorite with a large party here. In regard to Lieutenant Governor I have heard very little said. The sketch of the life of General Barker which you mention having sent me I have not seen. You did not give me the name of the paper in which it appeared and as we receive about a hundred daily it escaped my search. I have seen General Barker proposed as Lieutenant Governor in the Buffalo Republican, and shall speak of that circumstance in the Evening Post.

I am glad to hear that so good a spirit prevails in Genesee County. In this city we have no doubt of obtaining a handsome majority at the next election. We cannot however, yet say what will be the effect of laying the bankrupt bill on the table. I doubt however, whether, the great numbers of those who are warmest in favour of the passing of the bill without including corporations were not whigs already, and they would
no doubt have remained so, even if the bill had passed. I think therefore that the two thousand majority of which you speak would be a fair estimate.

I am sir in haste
yrs respectfully
W. C. BRYANT

P. S. Among other political publications, the Democrat's Almanac is published at the office of the Evening Post price $6—pr. 100.

W. C. B.

1. Lyman Copeland Draper (1815–1891), then a young man active in local politics in western New York State, later became a pioneer documentary historian of the early West, and from 1854 to 1886 secretary of the Wisconsin Historical Society.

2. See 320.6; Letter 353. As his paper's fortunes began to revive in 1839–1840, Bryant and his partner Boggs opened a job printing office where, in addition to producing commercial paper and forms, they published imprints having some interest for the business and political communities. By November of 1841 this operation was yielding more than 25% of the firm's profits. "Evening Post Accounts," NYPL–GR.

3. Samuel L. Young (1778?–1850), long a radical Democrat opposed to public improvements at government expense, was until 1840 a state canal commissioner and a member of the state senate. From 1842 to 1846 he was Secretary of State for New York. Hough, Biographical Notes.

4. Joseph Duncan (1794–1844) was a Democratic congressman from Illinois, 1827–1834, and governor of Illinois, 1834–1838. BDAC.

5. Robert John Walker (1801–1869, Pennsylvania 1819) was a Democratic senator from Mississippi, 1835–1845, and Secretary of the Treasury under President Polk, 1845–1849. The speech Bryant refers to was probably that made in the Senate on January 21, 1840. See Schlesinger, Age of Jackson, p. 116.

6. Samuel Young, Oration Delivered . . . July Fourth, 1840 (New York, 1840). No copy of Calhoun's letter of July 4th has been found.

7. Silas Wright (1795–1847) was a Democratic senator from New York, 1833–1844, and a firm supporter of the Jackson and Van Buren administrations. Though not a nominee for the office in 1840, he was elected governor of New York in 1845. He was one of the very few men in public life whom Bryant admired and supported without reservation. See EP, August 31, October 26, 1846, and August 28, 1847.


9. George P. Barker (1809?–1848) a radical Democrat and former member of the state assembly, was later Attorney General of New York State. Hough, Biographical Notes.

Dear Frances.

I reached the steamboat on Tuesday morning three or four minutes before it left the wharf, having walked very fast for the last mile which threw me into a profuse perspiration. The boat was crowded with people, whom however we got rid of gradually at the different landing places, Saw-Pitts, Stamford and Norwalk, so that when we arrived at Bridgeport there were few left. Bridgeport is a small and rather flourishing place on the Sound, with a few whaling vessels at anchor in the harbour. We arrived about twelve o'clock, the rail road cars set out about one. From Bridgeport to New Milford a distance of about forty miles our way lay through a savage and not very fertile region most of which yet lies in forest. We got to New Milford about four o'clock and I commenced my journey on foot. New Milford is rather a pleasant village on the banks of the Housatonic, with high hills around it and no great extent of meadow ground between them. Above, the valley of the Housatonic is still narrower, with many beautiful views, in consequence of the various arrangements of hills, forests, rocks and water. The afternoon was oppressively hot, and I had to stop often to cool myself under the shade of a tree and read Goethe's Tasso. About half past eight I reached Kent Plains or Kent Corner as it is sometimes called a little village of sixteen houses and a stone church, where the space between the mountains is wider than usual. For about half an hour I had walked in the rain, and at a faster pace than I should have liked so that I reached the inn hot and tired. The tavern was a nice and comfortable one. I had huckleberries and milk for supper and breakfast, and a tolerable bed, and after a comfortable night set out at six in the morning, a fresh cool morning, in high spirits. When I had travelled about eight miles I fell in with a man named Goodrich a workman in a forge, who had served as a sailor on board the man of war Independence, having enlisted in 1806 and with whom I travelled about four miles. His conversation amused me considerably. He was very inquisitive to know where I came from and what was my business, and I found had set me down in his own mind for a Methodist preacher. About one o'clock I arrived at Canaan falls, which are very beautiful. The basin into which the waters descend, spreads out on each side of the falls into a broad hollow, and the current as it leaps the precipice looks like falling masses of snow. There is a little island with trees on the very edge of the precipice, separating the cascade into two parts.

At half past six I reached Mr. Dewey's having walked thirty [two?] miles, and was not very tired. The family were all well except old Mrs. Dewey who broke her leg near the ankle about a fortnight since. She is
recovering as fast as can be expected. They all expressed their regret that I did not bring you with me, or at least that matters were not so arranged that you could have been at Sheffield at the same time. They gave me a cordial reception, and the next morning between ten and eleven, a cool morning I set out for Great Barrington. I should have mentioned that the Deweys expected me for they had heard from Fanny and Julia who with Mrs. Henderson called there on Tuesday, that I was probably on my way.

Here every body is well. Charles Henderson is here on a visit. [Appy?] and Gustavus went away yesterday. Thomas goes tomorrow—so do I, on my way to Stockbridge whither probably Mrs. Hopkins and Fanny will accompany me in a waggon. I shall go to Lenox before I come back and probably pass on to Lebanon, where I may pass this Sunday,³ and shall probably get to New York in the beginning of next week.⁴

Julia says give my love and Fanny's to Mother, and say that she must come up and see us if she possibly can. She is very well and happy. Fanny looks well.

Yts truly

W C. BRYANT


1. Port Chester, New York, was once known as the “Sawpits Village.”
2. Orville Dewey, now minister of the new Unitarian Church of the Messiah on Broadway, near Eighth Street, was a native of Sheffield, Massachusetts, where he summered at his family home.
3. Probably to visit the New Lebanon, New York, home of Samuel Jones Tilden (1814-1886), then studying law at New York University, and his father Elam, an ardent Democrat, both of whom Bryant had known since the early 1830s. He spent a brief holiday with the Tildens in the summer of 1841. Nevins, Evening Post, pp. 400-401; John Bigelow, The Life of Samuel J. Tilden, 2 vols. (New York: Harper, 1895), I, 19, 79-80.
4. The growing prosperity of his newspaper allowed Bryant to escape the city several times in the summer of 1840. One such excursion had been proposed in June by the painter Thomas Cole: “There is a valley reported ‘beautiful’ in the mountains a few miles south of the [Kaaterskill] Clove— I have never explored it & am reserving the delicate morsel to be shared with you— Let me know that you can come & that quickly for if possible I would explore the Platte-Kill valley before the waters are low—If report says true there is a beautiful little Lake with a cascade tumbling into it— If you can only leave the City for a few days now come! & we can then hope to see you again when the season is more advanced—’” Cole to Bryant, June 15, 1840, NYPL-Miscellaneous Papers—Thomas Cole. Later that month Bryant traveled up the Hudson to Cole’s home at Catskill, and the two friends walked from the Mountain House at Pine Orchard southward to Plattekill Clove, then westward a few miles and across a ridge to the sources of Schoharie Creek and the Plattekill. Here they were transfixed by the prospect of a “grand mountain ridge, indented by deep notches, in one of which, a dark ravine called Stony Clove, the ice of winter remains unmelted throughout the year.” Bryant, in EP, July 24, 1840. One cannot escape the impression that this scene,
as it must have been described by Bryant and Cole to Asher Durand, supplied the
background for his idyllic painting of Bryant and Cole in the Catskills, "Kindred

390. To Rufus W. Griswold

New York August 17 1840.

Dear Sir.

Can you let me have the poems of Carlos Wilcox? I hear that Sprague
has a volume of poems in print, not yet published, and that they are in
your hands. Is it so? If it is, could I be obliged with a sight of them?

yrs truly

W C Bryant

MANUSCRIPT: HSPa ADDRESS: Rufus W. Griswold Esq / Office of the New Yorker.

1. In 1840 Rufus Wilmot Griswold (1815–1857) was Horace Greeley's assistant
editor on the weekly newspaper, the New Yorker, and had begun compiling his notable
anthology, The Poets and Poetry of America (1842). See 373.2. For his part, Bryant had
been engaged by the Harpers to edit a more modest collection, Selections from the
American Poets, as Number 111 in their rapidly growing Family Library. Appearing
late in 1840, this included five poems each by Carlos Wilcox (1794–1827) and Charles

391. To Richard H. Dana

New York September 12 1840

My dear sir.

Your book shall be reviewed in the Democratic Review. It shall go
hard also but I will find somebody to do the same office for it in the
New York Review. The book is a good subject for an article; it has
decided points; its nature is new and peculiar, and the dulness of the
commentary might be relieved by lively and interesting extracts.1

Since I saw you I have made two journeys into the country. Once I
went to New Milford in Connecticut by steam-boat and rail road, and
then walked up along the Housatonic through Kent, Cornwall, Canaan
and Sheffield to Great Barrington, fifty miles. There I saw my daughters,
and then walked to Pittsfield—from which I wandered over to Hampshire
County, to Worthington where I studied law and to Cummington, where
all that is left of my family rests in a burying-ground on the summit of
one of the broad highlands of that region.2

Do you know how beautiful the Canaan falls are? I never saw any
thing like them in New England; and yet I lived within eighteen miles
of them for ten years, without making them a visit. I always thought that
they were mere rapids. Yet they are extraordinarily beautiful—the whole
Housatonic pouring over the precipice in two broad irregular sheets of
snowy whiteness, with a little island of trees and shrubs hanging from
the brow of the rock between them.
My next visit was with my wife to Bethlehem, a Moravian settlement in Pennsylvania ninety years old—a peaceful, industrious, orderly comfortable little community. It is situated on the Lehigh, a rapid and most beautiful river, with an island in the midst shaded with old oaks and elms and drooping birches whose twigs hang down to the water. This is their pleasure ground, the place for their little assemblies, their birthday commemorations, coffee drinkings and musical parties,—for music is a passion with these people. They announce a death with plaintive music from their church tower; they accompany a corpse to the grave with music, and they hate the sound of a bell so much, that they never allow their church bell to strike more than a dozen times to call their population to worship. One of the pastors of the congregation was a fellow passenger with my wife when she came out from Havre.

I am glad you think of republishing your writings. It is time. I see no reason why you should not put in the reviews. Some of them are among your most characteristic compositions, nor do I perceive any reason for leaving out the short ones.

Your success at New Haven I have no doubt will bring you invitations to lecture at other places, though probably at your own risk, which seems to be the turn the fashion of lecturing is now taking.

Excuse me if I have not time to fill my sheet.

Yrs truly

WM C. BRYANT


1. Richard Henry Dana, Jr.'s Two Years Before the Mast was published by Harper & Bros. in September 1840—not in a trade edition, but only in their Family and School District Libraries, with the result that “for long periods of time the book was not to be found in the shops.” See illustration. Charles Francis Adams, Richard Dana, A Biography (Boston and New York, 1891), pp. 25–27.

2. Bryant meant, of course, “all that is left of my family in Cummington.” His father had been buried in 1820 in the cemetery adjoining his Grandfather Snell’s farm. His sister Sally, Mrs. Samuel Shaw, who had died in 1824, lay in the burial ground at Plainfield, five miles to the northward.

3. Bryant had been so pleased with Bethlehem on his brief visit in April (Letter 384) that he took Frances there for a holiday during the summer—apparently between his walking tours of the Catskills in June and the Berkshires in August. Frances Bryant, "Autobiographical Sketch." NYPL-GR.

392. To Willis Gaylord Clark

New York October 13, 1840.

Dear Sir

I made the inquiry about the lines on the burial place at Laurel Hill because I was much struck with them when they appeared, and
desired to put them into a little compilation of American Poetry which
I am making for Harper's School Library. I shall be very happy to
receive them in a corrected state, and also any other of your poems. I
have made inquiry for your volume but cannot find it. Allow me to say,
that if you do me the favour to send me any thing, it is of much con­se­quence [to] me that I should have it as soon as possible inas[much] as the
publishers are driving me very hard, and I fe[ar] will stop me, and pub­lish the collection in an incomplete state, if I do not make haste. The
lines of which you speak, are in fact already in the hands of the printer,
but any changes you may suggest can be made.

I am sir
yrs respectfully
WM C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: CU.

1. Willis Gaylord Clark (1808–1841), twin brother of the better-known Lewis
Gaylord Clark (1808–1873), who edited the Knickerbocker from 1834 to 1861, was a
Philadelphia editor and poet. As a youth of eighteen, in 1826, he had seen his first
verses in print in the United States Review, after they had been radically rewritten by
its generous poetry editor, Bryant. See 160.5.

2. "The Burial-Place at Laurel Hill," which Bryant printed with two other poems
by Clark in his Selections from the American Poets, pp. 295–298. Its poignancy was
heightened by Clark's death from tuberculosis within less than a year after this letter
was written.

393. To Richard H. Dana

New York October 15 1840

My dear sir.

I have but a moment to say to you that my review of "Two Years
before the Mast" was written for the Democratic Review ten days ago,¹
and Mr. Sedgwick, Theodore Sedgwick [III]—is to write one for the New
York Review. Among the Critical Notices of the October number of that
work was a short one on your son's book and I feared on seeing it that
Mr. Cogswell might be unwilling to admit another and longer article,
but Mr. Sedgwick has seen him and he has promised to insert one.²

The book takes wonderfully; every body likes it; the newspapers all
praise it;³ it is read by all orders ages and conditions of men; my little
Julia finished it at two or three sittings. I have rarely known a book so
generally spoken well of. The narrative of manoeuvres with the sails, the
rigging, and all that sort of thing I do not find out of proportion to the
rest of the book as I supposed I might. I judged only from reading por­tions of it, and in manuscript, where unusual and technical phraseology
is not so well managed as in print.

Yrs truly
W. C BRYANT
1. In his unsigned notice of young Dana's masterpiece in the Democratic Review, 8 (October 1840), 318–335, Bryant anticipated modern criticism: "It is a new thing in our literature. . . . Not only is the description graphic and striking, but you feel as you read it, that nothing is overcolored or exaggerated. . . . The author has evidently no view to entertain or surprise his reader, but merely a desire to set before him a faithful account of what actually happened; he writes as if he were on oath; there is not a word in it which he might not swear to; you are convinced that . . . his waves run no higher and his winds howl no louder than he saw and heard them. . . . Some part of this effect may be owing to the unlabored simplicity of the style, which, however, is seasoned with a kind of dry humor, showing itself here and there when the author manifestly cannot help it, and now and then a touch of sea drollery" (pp. 318–319). Bryant foresaw, as well, that the book should go a long way—which it did—toward relieving the intolerable conditions under which common sailors at sea were placed at the mercy of calloused shipowners and despotic captains.

2. Joseph Green Cogswell (1786–1871, Harvard 1806), then editor of the New York Review, had previously been a librarian and professor at Harvard, and George Bancroft's associate in operating the experimental Round Hill School at Northampton, 1823–1831. From 1848 to 1861 he was superintendent of the Astor Library in New York. The first, short notice appeared in the New York Review, 7 (October 1840), 535–537.

3. In his own journal, Bryant called young Dana's tale "a narrative scarcely inferior in interest to the most powerful work of fiction." EP, September 23, 1840.

394. To Richard H. Dana

New York Nov 24 1840.

My dear sir,

I wrote you word that I had engaged Theodore Sedgwick to write an article on "Two Years before the Mast" for the New York Review. Mr. Cogswell had consented to admit it and I supposed that the thing was as good as done. I have now received from Mr. Sedgwick the entire article prepared by him for the press, with a note informing me that it had been submitted to the editor of the New York Review, and that he had declined inserting it. I went immediately to see Mr. Sedgwick and find that the reason for rejecting it was that it was too much like the previous critical notice, being principally composed of extracts from the work, and that when [Cogswell] consented to admit another article on the book he expected something more elaborate—something, I should suppose, in the nature of a treatise or dissertation.

What shall I do with the article? Most of the periodicals have already noticed the book in some way or other. Can you advise me?

My wife desires me to thank you in her name for the copy you sent her.

My collection of American poetry is in print but not yet published. It comprises, I find on counting them, pieces from seventy-eight authors. and I suppose I might have made it a hundred, for after you get beyond about half a dozen, where are you to stop? I am sure that I took on
several, whose verses, when I first engaged to make the selection, I did not think I should look at.¹

Yours truly
Wm C. Bryant


1. In his Selections from the American Poets Bryant was more generous to several now forgotten versifiers than he was to himself; he included only four of his own poems—"The Past," "The Prairies," "The Rivulet," and "Earth's Children Cleave to Earth."

395. To William Gilmore Simms

[New York, cNovember 1–15, 1840]

I received some time since your very kind letter in which you invite my daughter to pass the winter at your plantation, an invitation urged with all the warmth of hospitality peculiar to you people of the south.¹ I have never had a kinder or more truly friendly letter, and if I have been slow in answering it, it was because her mother and myself were made to hesitate a little by the extreme cordiality of the invitation whether it ought not to be accepted.

We have at last come to the conclusion that Fanny had better remain the present winter with us. Her health which has been delicate the past year, is gradually and slowly growing somewhat firmer, and her mother is unwilling to think of her going so far from us, and so long, in the present state of her constitution, unless a change of climate should be necessary, which it does not by any means seem to be.

In the mean time I have many thanks to present you both on her part and that of her mother and mine also for your hospitable invitation, and to assure [you] that the impression made by its kindness will not soon be effaced.

For that part of the letter which regards myself, I can assure you that I have a strong curiosity to visit your part of the country—to see not so much the cities of the South as the country and the rural life of the South.—It is I admit a disproportionate curiosity, that is to say stronger than the kind of knowledge acquired by such observation deserves—but such is my natural inclination—If I can find the leisure and raise the wind as the saying is I may possibly be tempted to play truant towards spring—if my daughter came then I certainly should—and visit you in your winter retreat. I cannot now say whether I shall be able to gratify the inclination. Mean time I am greatly obliged to your father in law for his kindness in thinking of me in connection with the opening of the spring in your genial climate, and I beg you to assure him of the pleasure I should take in beholding with my corporeal eyes the beauty of which he speaks—²
Mrs. Bryant and my daughter desire to be cordially remembered. Present their best regards and mine to Mrs. Simms and to your daughter—who I suppose is now a young lady—

Sincerely

W. C. Bryant

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR (draft).

1. Simms, then active in Charleston literary circles, nonetheless spent much of his time on a large plantation, Woodlands, about seventy miles west of the city on the Edisto River. His daughter by an earlier marriage, Augusta, had attended the Rose Cottage Seminary at Great Barrington for several years, where she had been strongly attracted to Fanny Bryant, five years her senior. In 1836 Simms had married the young daughter of a Barnwell District plantation owner, Nash Roach, whose property Simms subsequently managed. He had written Bryant on September 29 urging that Fanny be allowed to spend five or six months, from November to May, as company for Augusta, and for Simms’s wife Chevillette, only five years older than Fanny. Letter in NYPL-GR; see also Simms, Letters, I, 178.

2. In Simms’s reply on January 10 following (ibid., I, 213–215) he regretted that Fanny could not come, but was pleased with Bryant’s “partial promise” to visit Woodlands in the spring, hoping his friend would bring the “‘dam and all her little ones’” (cf. Macbeth IV.iii.219—an unfortunate allusion in this instance!). His father-in-law, Simms added, was a great admirer of Bryant’s verses, and “fancies that our Southern woods yield the most glorious glimpses in springtime and autumn beside,” and thinks that “when you ever see them,—you will find some very efficient mode of making the public familiar with their beauties also.” But when Bryant finally visited Woodlands, in March 1843, he was moved, rather, to describe in letters to the EP the amusing capers and tragicomic songs of the slaves on Roach’s plantation (see Letter 453).

396. To James Kirke Paulding


My dear sir

At the desire of Mr. E. B. Greenman, a respectable inhabitant of this city, and known a warm and active friend of the administration, I write to inquire if there is any chance whatever for a person from this city to obtain the office of purser in the United States Navy, in which he informs me that there is now a vacancy. If there is any rule which would exclude a person applying from this state, he would not give you the molestation of soliciting the place nor himself the trouble of obtaining testimonials.

May I rely on your kindness briefly to answer this inquiry?

Yrs truly

Wm C. Bryant

1. The novelist and short story writer James Kirke Paulding (1778–1860), a collaborator of Bryant's in writing *Tales of Glauber-Spa* in 1832 (see 226.1), was Secretary of the Navy in President Van Buren's cabinet from 1838 to 1841. During the 1830s and 1840s he was an occasional contributor to the *EP*. Shortly before the date of this letter, he had written to Bryant explaining at some length why he would not interfere in the Navy Department's appointment of shipyard personnel, and had gone on to praise Bryant's conduct of his newspaper: "The manner in which the Evening Post is conducted; its staid and sober dignity, and its freedom from the base [slang?] and still baser falsehoods, with which so many newspapers are debauched and disgraced, makes me proud to remember, that I have a humble claim to be associated with its honours." Letter dated November 15, 1840, NYPL-GR.

2. Unidentified.

3. Paulding's reply of February 1 is unrecovered.

397.  *To John Keese*¹

New York  Feb  17  1841.

My dear sir

I have nothing in my *portfolio* of the kind you speak of, nor indeed of any other, for I have never any poetry laid up. But when your letter reached me it put an idea into my head which I have put into verse, and you have it on the other half of this sheet.² I make it a rule to contribute nothing to Annuals and publications of that kind, but I remembered how obliging you had been to me in a recent instance, and you know that there is no rule without exceptions.

I am sir
very sincerely
Yrs &c

W C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: Pierpont Morgan Library
ADDRESS: John Keese Esq. / Bookseller / 254 Pearl Street / New York / Private.

1. John Keese (1805–1856) was a member of the book auction house of Cooley and Keese, "acting as auctioneer and attracting attention by the wit and ingenuity with which he conducted sales." Lehmann-Haupt, *The Book in America*, pp. 255–256; Longfellow, *Letters*, II, 342. Bryant later called him "one of the most obliging men that ever lived." Letter 429. His letter asking verses from Bryant is unrecovered.

2. On the third page of this letter Bryant transcribed a 31-line blank verse poem, "The Painted Cup," adding in a note the flower's botanical name, *Euchroma Coccinea*. This poem, reprinted in the *EP* on October 29, 1841, has previously been supposed to have been composed in Illinois during Bryant's visit there in June 1841. But his only reference to this flower in his letters seems to have been that of June 1832 (Letter 246) during the tour of the prairies near the Sangamon River, and his inspiration must have its origin in that experience:

"... The fresh savannahs of the Sangamon
Here rise in gentle swells, and the long grass
Is mixed with rustling hazels. Scarlet tufts
Are glowing in the green, like flakes of fire;"
The wanderers of the prairie know them well,  
And call the brilliant flower the Painted Cup . . . ."

(Poems [1876], p. 282).

The imagery of this poem has impressed one critic as "Bryant at his figurative best," combining the "elements which contribute to the rich sonority and high seriousness of Bryant's great works in blank verse." Albert F. McLean, Jr., William Cullen Bryant (New York: Twayne [1964]), pp. 128-129. It is uncertain whether this poem appeared in any of Keese's numerous publications.

398. To Richard H. Dana

My dear Sir

I have waited, before answering your letter,¹ to see the Harpers, in order to tell them that they ought to make your son an additional compensation for a work which had been so successful. This I did the other day, and they declared to me that thus far they made nothing by the work, and professed themselves perfectly willing to let the author or any of his friends look at their books and satisfy himself of this fact.

One of them, James Harper, entered into a sort of rough calculation. He supposed that there had been about 10,000 copies printed, and that seven or eight thousand had been sold. If that number of copies had been printed they would have cost, he computed about $3200. If the whole ten thousand had been sold they would yield he said about $3,150 or thereabouts, making a loss of about fifty dollars. Part of the edition, that which is disposed of to the school libraries, he has sold at 30½ cents a copy, the rest at 37½ cents. The reason why they have made nothing, he stated to be the size of the volume, which contains 480 pages, and therefore he says cannot really be afforded at the price he is asking for it, though on account of the uniform rule which the partnership have established in regard to works of the kind he cannot ask more. It should have been, he said, in two volumes, and if I understood him rightly, he intimated, that if the work had not been printed in Boston, but in this city where a calculation of the number of pages might have been made with sufficient certainty, before the work of stereotyping had proceeded too far, he would have caused it to be printed in two volumes.

Mean time the work stands high in public favor, though I need not tell you of that. A friend of mine told me of a conversation which some respectable seafaring men had concerning it last evening. They expressed themselves in the highest terms of its excellence, the admirable fidelity of its description of a sailor's life, the humanity and sense of justice shown in every part of it, and concluded on the whole that it was one of the best books that ever was written.

My arrangement with the Harpers is this. They have stereotyped my poems. For every copy they print they pay me 25 cents. When I am tired
of the bargain I can put an end to it by paying them for the plates, and taking them into my possession.

I had hoped that your lectures would prove more profitable this winter than the last. They pay lecturers nothing here—the literary societies I mean, such as the Lyceum the Mercantile Library Association &c. Last year the Mercantile Lib. Asso. got about a thousand dollars in debt by paying for lectures. This year, they ask a lecture from one man and a lecture from another—such men as are desirous of finding an audience and indulging their love of notoriety or love of being useful. If I had found any of them pursuing the old plan of paying the lecturers I would have made an early attempt to have you included and invited.

The Harpers, I doubt not will undertake the publication of your work, but if you expect to make much by it you must put the price rather high, as I have done. Is it not a fact that a single volume of poetry sells better than two, just as a novel in two volumes sells better than one? Is not a single volume of verse as great a load as a purchaser cares to take at once? Think of this. If you wish me to speak to the H’s. say the word and I will do it.

My wife has been ill for about a fortnight past, but is now recovering quite rapidly. The rest of us are in our usual health. They all desire to be cordially remembered. By the way, the fragment of a larger poem is only a fragment of a poem planned, not of a poem executed, and I cannot tell how long it will be.—

The copy of your son’s book has not been forwarded to Cooper for want of an opportunity. In the spring a bookseller will come down and it may be sent by him. The corrections made by your son will be attended to when the book is printed again.—


1. Unrecovered.

2. The previous month Bryant had been notified by the secretary of the Mercantile Library Association of his election to honorary membership in this flourishing institution located in Clinton Hall, at the corner of Beekman and Nassau streets. To the complimentary words of the resolution adopted by the association’s Board of Direction, its secretary added his own florid tribute to “one whom American Scenery has inspired; one who has been led to those scenes where nature’s still small voice is heard issuing from the calm scenery of its native wilds, teaching lessons of morality and wisdom; and one whose numbers the Genius of American verse will place in one of the loftiest niches in her temple . . . , when the day and Generation of the Poet shall have passed, and his name be alone registered in the records of song.” Horatio N. Otis to Bryant, January 16, 1841, Homestead Collection.

3. “An Evening Revery,” published in the Knickerbocker for January 1841, and reprinted in the EP on January 14, 1841, with the subtitle “From an unfinished poem.” See Poems (1876), pp. 279–282. Bryant’s note (p. 497) adds, “This poem and that entitled ‘The Fountain,’ with one or two others in blank verse, were intended by the
author as portions of a larger poem, in which they may hereafter take their place." For many years Dana had been urging his friend to compose a long poem: "A man does not feel himself completely till he grapples with something that will hold him a tug" (103.5; see also Letters 165, 216, 237). But Bryant never brought these fragments together; each continued throughout his lifetime to stand as an entity in his collected poems.

4. Despite Bryant's promise, Fenimore Cooper did not get his copy of Two Years Before the Mast until the following October, when he wrote Dana that Bryant had just handed him Dana's letter of more than a year earlier promising to forward a copy, which, he wrote, the Harpers "ought to have sent me... long since." He added that a friend had inquired whether the book had been written by Cooper himself under an alias, assuring Dana, "The work has at once put the youngster down in the midst of us—where he will probably remain long after we are gone." Cooper to Dana, October 15, 1841, in Cooper, Letters & Journals, IV, 181.

5. Conclusion and signature missing.

399. To Fanny Bryant

New York April 27, 1841.

Dear Fanny.

Your letter came this morning (Tuesday) and supposing that it might require an immediate answer I opened it and found it as I expected. As you wish to stay till next week, I think you might better stay; you can have had little enjoyment of the country yet, but if you find an opportunity to come down the beginning of next week you would do well to take advantage of it. I have not yet seen your mother, but when I go home, if she should think you ought to come down this week I will endeavour to get a letter to the post office in season.

On Saturday Miss Henschel was married to Mr. Stahlknechte. He is a merchant settled in Mexico; she is to go with him first to Germany and then to Mexico. We went to an evening party after the wedding; it was mostly composed of Germans. Mr. Maroncelli and his wife were there, and Professor Robinson and the Professorin. Miss Henschel sails in the Great Western on Saturday.2

Yrs affectionately

WM. C. BRYANT


1. Letter unrecovered.

2. Edward Robinson (1794–1863, Hamilton 1816), then professor of sacred literature at Union Theological Seminary and a distinguished biblical scholar, was married to Therese Albertine Louise von Jacob (1797–1870), a German philologist as well as a novelist. For the exiled Italian revolutionary Piero Maroncelli. see 277.1. Miss Henschel and Mr. Stahlknechte have not been further identified.
400. To Richard H. Dana

New York April 27 1841.

My dear sir

Your letter was put into my hands yesterday. My wife and I shall be heartily glad to receive you at the time of which you speak. I am sorry to hear that your visit to Providence did you so little good. Perhaps it was the milder air of New York that you needed to restore you. Come and try it; it was a medicine to you last winter, and who knows but it will be so again. But come in season—that is do not delay your visit very late, for I am preparing with Mrs. B. to set out on a journey about the 20th of May. My house is No. 326 Ninth Street—name on the door.

I have seen some of the English notices of your son's book, which only do it the justice which a good book of that kind must extort from every man of sense. The only thing I have seen at all unfavorable is the foolish notice which appeared in the Southern Literary Messenger.

You ask for literary news. Nothing occurs to me at present except that Emerson's Miscellanies is published in Boston which you know I suppose as well as I. There is a life of Tom Paine on my table, and a New System of Shorthand, but neither of these I suppose would be of much interest to you.

Remember me kind[ly] . . .


1. Unrecovered.
2. To Illinois; see Letters 402–404.
3. This short notice was foolish indeed: "Two Years Before the Mast . . . contains little that is novel or striking, except certain details relative to 'hide-curing,' 'slipping for south-easters,' 'owls,' and 'Coati,' on the coast of California. . . . There is much repetition, and frequent instances of careless expression." The reviewer was scornful of a Harvard student's presumption in writing of life in the forecastle, conceding only that "to some inland reader it may convey new intelligence of the sea and its trials." Southern Literary Messenger, 6 (November 1840), 78.
6. Conclusion and signature missing.

401. To Richard H. Dana

New York May 21 1841.

My dear sir

This letter will be put into your hands by Mr. Brackett whose Binding of Satan you have seen, and of which I am glad you think so well.
Might I ask of you for a meritorious and modest young artist the favour to give him an introduction to Mr. Allston?1

Yrs truly
Wm. C. Bryant

MANUSCRIPT: YCAL ADDRESS: R. H. Dana Esq.

I. The sculptor Edward Augustus Brackett (1818–1908), born in Maine, came to New York in 1841 and exhibited that year for the first time at the National Academy. The next year, perhaps with the help of Washington Allston, he settled in Boston, where he had a long and successful artistic career (his fine bust of Allston, c1850, is in the New-York Historical Society). Like his fellow-artists Morse and Rand, he was an inventor; as chairman of the Massachusetts Fish Commission, he developed a hatching trap still in use today. In 1842 he modeled a bust of Bryant from which several casts were made, and with which his subject was dissatisfied—perhaps because several friends mistook it for a likeness of Henry Clay, for whom the Democratic editor had no great respect! DAA; NAD Exhibition Record, I, 47; Brackett to Bryant, July 28, 1844, NYPL-GR; Letter 564.

402. [To the Evening Post?]1

Pittsburgh May 29 1841.

I have scarcely ever been more struck with the approach to any city than I was on my arrival at Pittsburgh, on the evening of day before yesterday,2 a little after sunset, and the chimneys, cylindrical and cone-like of the manufactories formed a singular contrast with the golden colours. Clouds of smoke, sometimes in large blots sometimes in huge columns vomited from the huge chimney, conelike or cylindrical, of the manufactories, and sometimes in the form of a thin haze-like curtain along the ridges of the hills, and here and there the sky was descried flushing with the golden colours of sunset. Below rolled the Allegheny crossed by three lofty bridges and under the folds of smoke were descried the black roofs of the houses, the spires and towers of the churches looking grand in the dim air—and over the summit of a hill we saw the new courthouse, which with its dome looms as huge apparently as St. Peters, looking like the ghost of some gigantic building. The dimness of the atmosphere gave to the objects all the effect of distance, except that of [diminished size?], and therefore made them seem larger than they [could have been?]. A kind of amphitheatre of hills surrounds the town, some of which are prettily wooded, and on the slopes or summits of which are scattered farm houses, and other buildings. On entering Pittsburgh however all the grandeur vanishes except that which belongs to natural objects, to the hills which form the north and south sides of the town. You find yourself in a more [fitting city?], not well built and not over clean, but bearing every mark of industry and prosperity.

The people of Pittsburgh are a jumble of all races of the world,
“For here the exiles meet from every clime
And speak in friendship every distant tongue”

all the languages of Europe are jabbered in her markets. Yet I was yesterday assured by a distinguished citizen of the place that the population is among the most orderly and moral in the world. “It is their industry” said he “that [forces?] this good behavior; they are all employed; [there are a few not?] but they all find the means of obtaining a livelihood, we have no class of idlers among us—none above or below the necessity of daily labour, and they have no time to practice the vices.” He spoke also favorably of the general intelligence.

The new court house which I have [mentioned?] is a handsome and spacious building just finished; the material is the common brown stone of the country. From its summit you have a fine view of the town, the two swift rivers on which it is seated, too swift in the current to be navigated except by steamboats, the surrounding hills and villages and vallies winding off into the country. A batch of woodland two or three miles distant was pointed out to me which had been sold in 1837 for a thousand dollars an acre. The healthful site of Pittsburgh preserved it from the cholera in 1832 and the subsequent seasons, but nothing could keep out the epidemic of speculation, which has checked its growth more effectively than two or three seasons of the cholera could have done. The business of the place however has [revived?] lately and the population is again beginning to increase.

**Manuscript:** NYPL–GR (draft).

1. This barely legible preliminary draft letter seems to have been intended for publication in the *EP*, but it appeared neither there nor in *LT* I. Perhaps Bryant did not prepare the final copy, or perhaps it was lost in the mail.

2. In her “Autobiographical Sketch” (NYPL–GR), Frances Bryant noted that on May 22, 1841, “Mr. Bryant Fanny & myself set out for Illinois,” leaving Julia at Great Barrington with her aunt Mina Hopkins. On the outward journey they followed a route much like that taken by Bryant in 1832—overland through Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, then by steamboat down the Ohio and up the Mississippi and Illinois rivers, and by carriage to Princeton. They returned, as he had been prevented from doing on the earlier trip by the Black Hawk War, by way of Chicago, and by Great Lakes steamboat to Buffalo, and visited Niagara Falls and the Seneca Indian reservation on the way to East Bloomfield, where Cullen left his wife and Fanny for a visit with Frances’ sister Eugenie Tobey (see 38.1), while he went on to New York by way of Great Barrington.

3. Quotation unidentified.

**403. To the Evening Post**


I have just returned from an Excursion to Rock River, one of the most beautiful of our western streams.
We left Princeton on the 17th of the month, and after passing a belt of forest which conceals one of the branches of the Bureau River, found ourselves upon the wide, unfenced prairie, spreading away on every side until it met the horizon. Flocks of turtle-doves rose from our path scared at our approach; quails and rabbits were seen running before us; the prairie-squirrel, a little striped animal of the marmot kind, crossed the road; we started plovers by the dozen, and now and then a prairie-hen, which flew off heavily into the grassy wilderness. With these animals the open country is populous, but they have their pursuers and destroyers; not the settlers of the region, for they do not shoot often, except at a deer, or a wild turkey, or a noxious animal; but the prairie-hawk, the bald-eagle, the mink, and the prairie-wolf, which make merciless havoc among them and their brood.

Fifteen miles beyond we came to Dad Joe's Grove, in the shadow of which thirteen years ago, a settler named Joe Smith, who had fought in the battle of the Thames,¹ one of the first white inhabitants of this region, seated himself, and planted his corn, and gathered his crops quietly, through the whole [Black Hawk] Indian war, without being molested by the savages, though he was careful to lead his wife and family to a place of security. As Smith was a settler of such long standing, he was looked to as a kind of patriarch in the county, and to distinguish him from other Joe Smiths, he received the venerable appellation of Dad. He has since removed to another part of the state, but his well-known, hospitable cabin, inhabited by another inmate, is still there, and his grove of tall trees, standing on a ridge amidst the immense savannahs, yet retains his name. As we descended into the prairie we were struck with the novelty and beauty of the prospect which lay before us. The ground sank gradually and gently into a low but immense basin, in the midst of which lies the marshy tract called the Winnebago Swamp. To the northeast the sight was intercepted by a forest in the midst of the basin, but to the northwest the prairies were seen swelling up again in the smoothest slopes to their usual height, and stretching away to a distance so vast that it seemed boldness in the eye to follow them.

The Winnebagoes and other Indian tribes which formerly possessed this country have left few memorials of their existence, except the names of places. Now and then, as at Indiantown, near Princeton, you are shown the holes in the ground where they stored their maize, and sometimes on the borders of the rivers you see the trunks of trees which they felled, evidently hacked by their tomahawks, but perhaps the most remarkable of their remains are the paths across the prairies or beside the large streams, called Indian trails—narrow and well-beaten ways, sometimes a foot in depth, and many of them doubtless trodden for hundreds of years.

As we went down the ridge upon which stands Dad Joe's Grove, we saw many boulders of rock lying on the surface of the soil of the
prairies. The western people, naturally puzzled to tell how they came there, give them the expressive name of "lost rocks." We entered a forest of scattered oaks, and after travelling for half an hour reached the Winnebago Swamp, a tract covered with tall and luxuriant water-grass, which we crossed on a causey built by a settler who keeps a toll-gate, and at the end of the causey we forded a small stream called Winnebago Inlet. Crossing another vast prairie we reached the neighborhood of Dixon, the approach to which was denoted by groves, farm-houses, herds of cattle, and inclosed corn fields, checkering the broad green prairie.

Dixon, named after an ancient settler of the place still living, is a country town situated on a high bank of Rock River. Five years ago two log-cabins only stood on the solitary shore, and now it is a considerable village, with many neat dwellings, a commodious court-house, several places of worship for the good people, and a jail for the rogues, built with a triple wall of massive logs, but I was glad to see that it had no inmate.

Rock River flows through high prairies, and not, like most streams of the west, through an alluvial country. The current is rapid, and the pellucid waters glide over a bottom of sand and pebbles. Its admirers declare that its shores unite the beauties of the Hudson and of the Connecticut. The banks on either side are high and bold; sometimes they are perpendicular precipices, the base of which stands in the running water; sometimes they are steep grassy or rocky bluffs, with a space of dry alluvial land between them and the stream; sometimes they rise by a gradual and easy ascent to the general level of the region, and sometimes this ascent is interrupted by a broad natural terrace. Majestic trees grow solitary or in clumps on the grassy acclivities, or scattered in natural parks along the lower lands upon the river, or in thick groves along the edge of the high country. Back of the bluffs, extends a fine agricultural region, rich prairies with an undulating surface, interspersed with groves. At the foot of the bluffs break forth copious springs of clear water, which hasten in little brooks to the river. In a drive which I took up the left bank of the river, I saw three of these in the space of as many miles. One of these is the spring which supplies the town of Dixon with water; the next is a beautiful fountain rushing out from the rocks in the midst of a clump of trees, as merrily and in as great a hurry as a boy let out of school; the third is so remarkable as to have received a name. It is a little rivulet issuing from a cavern six or seven feet high, and about twenty from the entrance to the further end, at the foot of a perpendicular precipice covered with forest-trees and fringed with bushes.

In the neighborhood of Dixon, a class of emigrants have established themselves, more opulent and more luxurious in their tastes than most of the settlers of the western country. Some of these have built elegant mansions on the left bank of the river, amidst the noble trees which seem to have grown up for that very purpose. Indeed, when I looked at
them, I could hardly persuade myself that they had not been planted to overshadow older habitations. From the door of one of these dwellings I surveyed a prospect of exceeding beauty. The windings of the river allowed us a sight of its waters and its beautifully diversified banks to a great distance each way, and in one direction a high prairie region was seen above the woods that fringed the course of this river, of a lighter green than they, and touched with the golden light of the setting sun.

I am told that the character of Rock River is, throughout its course, much as I have described it in the neighborhood of Dixon, that its banks are high and free from marshes, and its waters rapid and clear, from its source in Wisconsin to where it enters the Mississippi amidst rocky islands. What should make its shores unhealthy I can not see, yet they who inhabit them are much subject to intermittent fevers. They tell you very quietly that every body who comes to live there must take a seasoning. I suppose that when this country becomes settled this will no longer be the case. Rock River is not much subject to inundations, nor do its waters become very low in summer. A project is on foot, I am told, to navigate it with steam-vessels of a light draught.

When I arrived at Dixon I was told that the day before a man named Bridge, living at Washington Grove, in Ogle county, came into town and complained that he had received notice from a certain association that he must leave the county before the seventeenth of the month, or that he would be looked upon as a proper subject for Lynch law. He asked for assistance to defend his person and dwelling against the lawless violence of these men. The people of Dixon county came together and passed a resolution to the effect, that they approved fully of what the inhabitants of Ogle county had done, and that they allowed Mr. Bridge the term of four hours to depart from the town of Dixon. He went away immediately, and in great trepidation. This Bridge is a notorious confederate and harbinger of horse-thieves and counterfeiters. The thinly-settled portions of Illinois are much exposed to the depredations of horse-thieves, who have a kind of centre of operations in Ogle county, where it is said that they have a justice of the peace and a constable among their own associates, and where they contrive to secure a friend on the jury whenever any one of their number is tried. Trial after trial had taken place, and it had been found impossible to obtain a conviction on the clearest evidence, until last April, when, two horse-thieves being on trial, eleven of the jury threatened the twelfth with a taste of the cowskin unless he would bring in a verdict of guilty. He did so, and the men were condemned. Before they were removed to the state-prison, the court-house was burnt down and the jail was in flames, but luckily they were extinguished without the liberation of the prisoners. Such at length became the general feeling of insecurity, that three hundred citizens of Ogle county, as I understand, have formed themselves into a company of volun-
teers for the purpose of clearing the county of these men. Two horse-thieves have been seized and flogged, and Bridge, their patron, has been ordered to remove or abide the consequences.

As we were returning from Dixon on the morning of the 19th, we heard a kind of humming noise in the grass, which one of the company said proceeded from a rattlesnake. We dismounted and found that in fact it was made by a prairie-rattlesnake, which lay coiled around a tuft of herbage, and which we soon dispatched. The Indians call this small variety of the rattlesnake, the Massasauger. Horses are frequently bitten by it and come to the doors of their owners with their heads horribly swelled, but they are recovered by the application of hartshorn. A little further on, one of the party raised the cry of wolf, and looking we saw a prairie-wolf in the path before us, a prick-eared animal of a reddish-gray color, standing and gazing at us with great composure. As we approached, he trotted off into the grass, with his nose near the ground, not deigning to hasten his pace for our shouts, and shortly afterward we saw two others running in a different direction.

The prairie-wolf is not so formidable an animal as the name of wolf would seem to denote; he is quite as great a coward as robber, but he is exceedingly mischievous. He never takes full-grown sheep unless he goes with a strong troop of his friends, but seizes young lambs, carries off sucking-pigs, robs the henroost, devours sweet corn in the gardens, and plunders the water-melon patch. A herd of prairie-wolves will enter a field of melons and quarrel about the division of the spoils as fiercely and noisily as so many politicians. It is their way to gnaw a hole immediately into the first melon they lay hold of. If it happens to be ripe, the inside is devoured at once, if not, it is dropped and another is sought out, and a quarrel is picked with the discoverer of a ripe one, and loud and shrill is the barking, and fierce the growling and snapping which is heard on these occasions. It is surprising. I am told, with what dexterity a wolf will make the most of a melon, absorbing every remnant of the pulp, and hollowing it out as clean as it could be scraped by a spoon. This is when the allowance of melons is scarce, but when they are abundant he is as careless and wasteful as a government agent.

Enough of natural history. I will finish my letter another day.

June 26th.

Let me caution all emigrants to Illinois not to handle too familiarly the "wild parsnip," as it is commonly called, an umbelliferous plant growing in the moist prairies of this region. I have handled it and have paid dearly for it, having such a swelled face that I could scarcely see for several days.

The regulators of Ogle county removed Bridge's family on Monday last and demolished his house. He made preparations to defend himself,
and kept twenty armed men about him for two days, but thinking, at last, that the regulators did not mean to carry their threats into effect, he dismissed them. He has taken refuge with his friends, the Aikin family, who live, I believe, in Jefferson Grove, in the same county, and who, it is said, have also received notice to quit.

**Manuscript: NYPL-GR (draft) Text: LT I, pp. 55–63; first published in EP for July 8, 1841.**

1. An engagement on October 5, 1813, on the Thames River near Chatham, Ontario, between Americans under General William Henry Harrison and a mixed force of British regulars and Indians, whose chief Tecumseh (c1768–1813), holding the rank of British brigadier-general, was killed—reputedly by Colonel Richard M. Johnson, later Vice President under Van Buren.


### 404. To the Evening Post

**Princeton, Illinois, July 2, 1841.**

In my last letter I mentioned that the regulators in Ogle county, on Rock River, in this state, had pulled down the house of one Bridge, living at Washington Grove, a well-known confederate of the horse-thieves and coiners with which this region is infested.

Horse-thieves are numerous in this part of the country. A great number of horses are bred here; you see large herds of them feeding in the open prairies, and at this season of the year every full-grown mare has a colt running by her side. Most of the thefts are committed early in the spring, when the grass begins to shoot, and the horses are turned out on the prairie, and the thieves, having had little or no employment during the winter, are needy; or else in the autumn, when the animals are kept near the dwellings of their owners to be fed with Indian corn and are in excellent order. The thieves select the best from the drove, and these are passed from one station to another till they arrive at some distant market where they are sold. It is said that they have their regular lines of communication from Wisconsin to St. Louis, and from the Wabash to the Mississippi. In Ogle county they seem to have been bolder than elsewhere, and more successful, notwithstanding the notoriety of their crimes, in avoiding punishment. The impossibility of punishing them by process of law, the burning of the court-house at Oregon City last April, and the threats of deadly vengeance thrown out by them against such as should attempt to bring them to justice, led to the formation of a company of citizens, "regulators" they call themselves, who resolved to take the law into their own hands and drive the felons from the neighborhood. This is not the first instance of the kind which has happened in Illinois. Some twenty years since the southern counties contained a gang of horse-thieves, so numerous and well-organized as to defy punishment by legal means,
and they were expelled by the same method which is now adopted in Ogle county.

I have just learned, since I wrote the last sentence, that the society of regulators includes, not only the county of Ogle, but those of De Kalb and Winnebago, where the depredations of the horse-thieves and the perfect impunity with which they manage to exercise their calling, have exhausted the patience of the inhabitants. In those counties, as well as in Ogle, their patrons live at some of the finest groves, where they own large farms. Ten or twenty stolen horses will be brought to one of these places of a night, and before sunrise the desperadoes employed to steal them are again mounted and on their way to some other station. In breaking up these haunts, the regulators, I understand, have proceeded with some of the formalities commonly used in administering justice. The accused party has been allowed to make his defense, and witnesses have been examined both for and against him.

These proceedings, however, have lately suffered a most tragical interruption. Not long after Bridge's house was pulled down, two men, mounted and carrying rifles, called at the dwelling of a Mr. Campbell, living at Whiterock Grove, in Ogle county, who belonged to the company of regulators, and who had acted as the messenger to convey to Bridge the order to leave the county. Meeting Mrs. Campbell without the house, they told her that they wished to speak to her husband. Campell made his appearance at the door and immediately both the men fired. He fell mortally wounded and lived but a few minutes. "You have killed my husband," said Mrs. Campbell to one of the murderers whose name was Driscoll. Upon this they rode off at full speed.

As soon as the event was known the whole country was roused, and every man who was not an associate of the horse-thieves, shouldered his rifle to go in pursuit of the murderers. They apprehended the father of Driscoll, a man nearly seventy years of age, and one of his sons, William Driscoll, the former a reputed horse-thief, and the latter, a man who had hitherto borne a tolerably fair character, and subjected them to a separate examination. The father was wary in his answers, and put on the appearance of perfect innocence, but William Driscoll was greatly agitated, and confessed that he, with his father and others, had planned the murder of Campbell, and that David Driscoll his brother, together with another associate, was employed to execute it. The father and son were then sentenced to death; they were bound and made to kneel; about fifty men took aim at each, and, in three hours from the time they were taken, they were dead men. A pit was dug on the spot where they fell, in the midst of a prairie near their dwelling; their corpses, pierced with bullet-holes in every part, were thrown in, and the earth was heaped over them.

The pursuit of David Driscoll and the fellow who was with him when Campbell was killed, is still going on with great activity. More than
a hundred men are traversing the country in different directions, determined that no lurking-place shall hide them. In the mean time various persons who have the reputation of being confederates of horse-thieves, not only in Ogle county, but in the adjoining ones, even in this, have received notice from the regulators that they cannot be allowed to remain in this part of the state. Several suspicious-looking men, supposed to be fugitives from Ogle county, have been seen, within a few days past, lurking in the woods not far from this place. One of them who was seen the day before yesterday evidently thought himself pursued and slunk from sight; he was followed, but escaped in the thickets leaving a bundle of clothing behind him.

Amonock, Kane County, Illinois, July 5th.

I have just heard that another of the Driscoll’s has been shot by the regulators. Whether it was David, who fired at Campbell, or one of his brothers, I can not learn.


405. To Frances F. Bryant

New York 22 July 1841

My dear Frances.

I arrived here this morning—Thursday—having taken Great Barrington in my way. I found Julia a little taller, a little thinner, and a little paler than when we sent her up from New York. Her aunt said that she did not look so well as usual, that she had a head ache the day before which had not quite left her, &c. I left a homoeopathic dose with directions and think she will be better. Mrs. Hopkins bid me say to you that she had behaved herself with great propriety, and that her health had been for the most part very good. Julia told me that she went to school all day and did not play very much. I think however that she does not study very hard; her French lessons, in particular, she spoke of with a sort of contempt, as being very easy.

I find every thing in good order here. Miss Robbins appears not to be so well as in the spring, and will go to Boston on Monday.1 Barbara returned the day before yesterday and has just been asking me what she should do with herself. I shall consult Miss Robbins on the question whether sewing cannot be found somewhere to occupy her till you come back. Lena, I hear, has behaved herself very well and has appeared quite contented during our absence. Mr. Rudy has visited her to give her spiritual counsel and she appears to have profited by what he said to her.
Mr. Robert Sedgwick and his wife are at Avon Springs in your neighbourhood, and are to stay, as I hear, about a fortnight longer. The Elliots are out of town, except the young Doctor whom I saw today at the door of their house. Mr. Greely is very much recovered and has quite given up the idea of dying at present, his health has mended so much that his friends begin to hope that he may possibly regain it perfectly. I called on Dr. Hull today, who testified very great pleasure at hearing that Fanny was so much better, and reproached me with not having written to him. I am to call at his office tomorrow evening to look over the record of her case as it was two months since and point out the respects in which there has been an amendment.

The following is a literal transcript of Mrs. Rand's note to you. "37 Howland Street [London]. April 20th /41. —My beloved friend. The hour of promise is beginning to gild the dark cloud of adversity and I trust that in a year from this time you [will] have no reason to regret your long-suffering kindness. My anticipated joy is so great that my feeble health is almost as much injured by it, as it was by my depression. The hope of rendering you justice is almost more than I can bear. Oh, if I can live to do this I shall close my eyes in peace on all sublunary scenes. I send you this little word to comfort your heart and to assure you that I am truly yours L. B. Rand."

Miss Robbins says that Mr. Rand has invented some machines and taken out patents, by which he expects to make himself very rich. Perhaps this is the key to the meaning of Mrs. Rand's letter.

After I left you I reached Seneca Falls at about noon. The coach then carried us to Auburn in about an hour and a half, where we dined. At Auburn we took the rail road cars for Syracuse; they set out at 2 o'clock and reached Syracuse in a little less than two hours. We changed cars at Syracuse and reached Utica at 7 o'clock. Here we took another set of cars at 9 o'clock in the evening. At Schenectady, about 4 o'clock in the morning we were transferred to another set of cars and reached Albany at a little past five. I found that the Hartford coach did not go out until 9 in the evening and that it no longer goes through Great Barrington but through Egremont. I therefore had my baggage conveyed on board a steamboat and was landed at Hudson at about 9 o'clock on Tuesday morning. I waited here till half past four and took the rail road cars to West Stockbridge whence I procured a conveyance to Great Barrington.

When you set out from Syracuse it will save you trouble, in case you go immediately to Albany to have your baggage put into the Albany baggage car. But you may think best to stop in Utica and stay over night, in which case you will have your baggage put into the other car. If you stop at Utica over night you can take the cars the next morning and go through by day light. Pay at Utica all the way to Albany and have your baggage put into the Albany baggage car. If you arrive at Albany before
3 o'clock in the afternoon which I think you will—but you had better inquire—you will find a boat going to Hudson at that hour. At Hudson you might stay over night, and take the stage coach for Barrington the next morning. I would not advise you to think of going in the rail road cars to West Stockbridge. They travel slowly and the road is in bad order and the engine sheds showers of cinders; besides it is expensive getting from West Stockbridge to Barrington. The fare is from Canandaigua to Seneca Falls $1.25 thence to Auburn $.75; thence to Syracuse $1.25; thence to Utica $2.00; thence to Albany $3.75 making in all $9.00 besides which are the tavern expenses. I send you enclosed $10—in addition to what you have. Will you see to paying for the newspapers that have come to the Bloomfield Post Office.

It appears to me frightfully hot here; it is like the ladies' cabin on board a Mississippi steamboat in a hot day. Everything appears to have gone well at the office. Love to Fanny. Remember me to Mr. & Mrs. Tobey and all the family. Write soon. Miss Robbins desires her affectionate regards

Yrs affectionately

W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR
ADDRESS: Mrs. Frances F. Bryant / East Bloomfield / Ontario County / N. Y.
POSTAL ANNOTATION: 18[½?].

1. During the Bryants' two months' absence in the West, Eliza Robbins stayed in their home with the two German servants, Barbara and Lena, whose pastor Mr. Rudy was (see Letter 412). Parke Godwin to Julia Bryant, June 3, 1841, NYPL–GR.

2. Dr. Samuel MacKenzie Elliot. See 564.6.

3. Unidentified.

4. Dr. A. Gerard Hull, Jr., was associated in general practice on Charlton Street with his brother-in-law, Dr. John Franklin Gray (see 444.1), with whom he jointly edited the pioneering Homoeopathic Examiner. Wershub, 100 Years of Medical Progress, p. 13. For some time the partners shared the medical care of the Bryant family, but Dr. Gray became their close personal friend as well as physician, attending both Frances and Cullen Bryant in their final illnesses in 1866 and 1878. Bigelow, Bryant, pp. 300–301; Life, II, 243–244, 405. The nature of Fanny Bryant's illness at this time is uncertain.

5. Brackets as in text.


7. Though possessed of a versatile inventive genius, poor Rand apparently never made any money from his several contrivances, the most remarkable of which was his screw-top collapsible metal tube which not only "changed the whole character of painting," but became the prototype for the modern container for toothpaste, medicines, and a host of other products. Callow, Kindred Spirits, pp. 69–79, passim; The New York Times, September 11, 1956.
406. To Julia S. Bryant

New York  Tuesday  August 3, 1841.

My dear daughter

I was very glad to get a letter from you on Thursday,¹ and to hear
that you were better and were so well pleased with your school. I think
you must have had a pleasant frolic at the party you give me an account
of.

Yesterday I had a letter from your mother. She is quite well, and
Fanny continues to get better. They had been riding about the country
and I think had enjoyed their visit very much. I suppose you may expect
to see them in Great Barrington next week.

Pour votre petite amie, Eloise Payne,² elle n’est pas en ville; elle est à
voyager. Quand j’étais à Niagara, j’y trouvai dans le registre de l’hôtel, son
nom, à coté de ceux de son père et de sa tante, écrit par sa petite main. On
nous dit qu’ils avaient parti ce matin même, dont nous étions très faché.³

I do not hear any thing of Mary Perkins.⁴ Miss Robbins is gone to
Boston. I met Georgiana Errington and Katy the other day; they were very
well and so they told me were all the Errington family.⁵

Barbara ist zurückgekommen. Dem Garten geht’s nicht wohl. Die
Pflanzen sind nicht gut gewachsen, und Lena, glaub’ ich hat nicht viel
Unterschied zwischen Unkraut und Pflanze gemacht. Herr Godwin ist auf
eine Reise gegangen, und ich muss allein bleiben und sehr streng
arbeiten.⁶

The other day I was at Hoboken and saw all the Morton family.
Georgine and the rest of the children are very well; they all inquired
about you. Miss Sands I hear is at Rhinebeck where she passes the sum-
mer at “Uncle Peter’s” as she calls it, along with her mother.

Scrivami ancora una letterina. Io anche ti mandero una altra lettera
fra pochi giorni.⁷

Remember me to Mr. and Mrs. Hopkins and to all your uncles and
aunts and cousins.

Yrs affectionately

Wm C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR
ADDRESS: Miss Julia Bryant / Great Barrington / Mass.

1. Unrecovered.
3. “As for your little friend, Eloise Payne, she is not in town; she is on a journey.
   When I was at Niagara, I found there in the hotel register her name, beside those
   of her father and her aunt, written by her little hand. We were told that they had left
   that very morning, at which we were quite vexed.”
4. Mary Cleveland Bryant Perkins (1830–1921), the orphaned daughter of Dr.
   Henry Perkins (d. 1831) and Sarah Jones Perkins (d. 1837), was Frances Bryant’s
godchild. A childhood friend of Julia Bryant’s, she was later the wife of Frederick Law
Olmsted (1822–1903), creator of New York’s Central Park and a friend of Cullen

5. Georgiana was one of several daughters of an English merchant, George Errington, who emigrated to the United States in 1832 and settled in 1843 on Staten Island, where another daughter, Harriet, opened a select private school. A third daughter, Charlotte, married Ferdinand Field’s brother Alfred Field (1814–1884), American representative of their family hardware business. Sometime before 1844 the Alfred Fields became intimate friends of the Bryants’. *Ibid.*, p. 258n; Letter 488.

6. “Barbara has returned. The garden does not do well. The plants have not grown much, and Lena, I believe, has not made much distinction between weeds and plants. Mr. Godwin has gone on a journey, and I must remain alone and work very hard.”

7. “Write me another short letter. I, too, will send you another letter within the next few days.”

407. *To Thomas Cole*

New York August 6, 1841.

My dear sir

I have the pleasure to inclose you a few letters for Europe which I hope may be of use to you.²

Yours truly

WM C BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYSL.

1. Bryant mistakenly wrote “July.”


408. *To M. Barrault de la Gravière*

New York August 6, 1841.

Mon cher Monsieur.

Monsieur Thomas Cole qui vous presentera cette lettre, est un de mes meilleurs amis, et un peintre de grande genie. Je vous prie, Monsieur, de l’acceuillir avec cette bonté dont je vous suis deja si redevable.

Saluez de ma part Madame Barrault et Mademoiselle.

J’ai l’honneur de vous saluer²

WM C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: Detroit Institute of Arts

ADDRESS: à Monsieur / Monsieur Barrault / Heidelberg / Grand Duché de Bade.

1. Bryant mistakenly wrote “July.”

2. “My dear Sir. Mr. Thomas Cole, who will hand you this letter, is one of my best friends, and a painter of great genius. I beg you, Sir, to receive him with that kindness for which I am already so much in your debt. Remember me to Madame Barrault and Mademoiselle. I have the honor of greeting you.”
409. To G. C. Grandi\(^1\)  
New York  
August\(^2\) 6, 1841.

Caro Signore

Questo foglio vi verrà presentato dal Signore Cole, uno dei nostri migliori artisti, e chi ha acquistato gran fama nel nostro paese. Vi prego di riceverlo colla vostra solita bontà e di fargli le attenzioni delle quali un straniero ha sempre bisogno.

La Signora Bryant e le figlie che sono adesso nel campo stanno bene. Riverite, da parte mia, vostra nipote.

il vostro amico cordialissimo\(^3\)

W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYSL ADDRESS: Al Signore / G. C. Grandi / nel Bazaar / a Monaco / Bavaria.

1. The Bryants' landlord at Munich for three months during the summer of 1835. See 303.5.
2. Bryant mistakenly wrote "July."
3. "Dear Sir  This note will be presented to you by Mr. Cole, one of our best artists, and one who has attained great fame in our country. I pray you to receive him with your usual kindness and accord him the attention of which a stranger is always in need. Mrs. Bryant and our daughters, who are at present in the country, are well. Give my respects to your niece. Your most cordial friend."

410. To Julie Hepp\(^1\)  
New York  
August 6, 1841.

Dear Madam

I beg to presume so far upon the acquaintance I had with you in Germany, slight as it was, to present to you one of the most celebrated artists of this country Mr. Cole the bearer of this letter. Allow me to recommend him to those friendly civilities which you are so ready to show to my countrymen, and of which my family speak with so much gratitude.

My wife and daughters are now in the country to escape the summer heats, and are all well. I have just made with Mrs. Bryant and Fanny a long journey crossing the state of Pennsylvania from Philadelphia to Pittsburg, descending the Ohio to its mouth, ascending the Mississippi to its junction with the Illinois, then going up the Illinois to the head of navigation, and returning by way of Lake Michigan, Lake Huron Lake Ontario, and the Falls of Niagara.

My compliments to Mrs. Hepp and Miss Eva.

I am dear Madam
very respectfully & truly yours

Wm C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYSL ADDRESS: Miss Julie Hepp.
1. Julie Hepp, whose mother ran the boardinghouse at Heidelberg in which Clara Crowninshield lived in 1835–1836, had been a frequent companion of Frances and Fanny Bryant, and a warm friend to Clara, as long as they stayed in Heidelberg. See Crowninshield, Diary, pp. xxvii, 198ff.

411. To Giovanni Rosini

Nuova York li 6 Agosto 1841.

Stimatissimo Amico.

Il Signor Thomas Cole, pittore egregio del nostro paese, e l'eccellenza del cui cuore non è minore che il suo ingegno, vi recherà questa lettera. Sono persuaso che non bisogna dir più per raccomandarlo alla vostra bontà, della quale conservo una si piacevole memoria.

Il vostro cordialissimo Amico

W. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: NYSL ADDRESS: al Professore Rosini / nell' Università di Pisa.

1. "Most esteemed Friend. Mr. Thomas Cole, distinguished painter of our country, the excellence of whose heart is not less than his genius, will be the bearer of this letter. I am convinced that it is unnecessary to say more in order to recommend him to your goodness, of which I retain so pleasant a memory. Your most cordial Friend." It is not known to what extent, if any, Cole availed himself of the introductions Bryant provided in Letters 408–411.

412. To Julia S. Bryant

New York August 7 1841.

My dear Julia.

I thought, at least I hoped, that I might get another letter from you before this; but as you do not write to me, I am determined to make myself amends by writing to you. I saw Mr. Payne the other day; he told me that Eloise and her mother were both at Newport, resting after their journeys. They had been not only to Niagara, but to Montreal and Quebec, and returned by the way of Lake Champlain and Lake George. Yesterday I dined at Mr. Morton's in Hoboken. Georgine and Rutledge go to the school there in the village, and they are growing tall as fast as yourself. Your little friend Virginia Sinclair I saw the other day, and she seemed as gentle and happy as usual.

But what do you think happened the day before yesterday? On Tuesday, Barbara said she wished to speak to me. I had seen a young man about the kitchen every afternoon, for a few days before, and as soon as she said she wished a little private conversation with me, I guessed what it was about, and told her I believed she was going to be married. She owned that she was, and said that she was sorry to leave Mrs. Bryant, that Mrs. Bryant würde sich bewundern [would be surprised], but it was not to be helped, she was about to make an excellent match, and the young man was in haste to be married. He is a tinworker, originally from Saarlouis, in the Prussian dominions a sort of half French half German town, and he
speaks French better than he does English. He now lives in Savannah, where he is the foreman in a large tin factory and store. Barbara said that if Mrs. Bryant was at home she would ask leave to have the wedding take place in the basement. I told her she might have it performed in the parlour and welcome, which seemed to please her very much. The next day I was introduced to the young man, Herr Müller, who gave me an invitation to the wedding which was to take place on Thursday at ten o'clock in the morning. However, I was so busy at that hour that I could not attend. The next morning half a dozen friends of the bride and bridegroom came to the house and Mr. Rudy performed the marriage ceremony. When I came home about two o'clock, I found the table spread with wine and cake, and the new married couple, with one of their friends keeping off the flies which had come to the wedding without any invitation. They had ice cream, but this was all consumed so I took a piece of cake and drank their health in a glass of Rhenish. It was Hochheimer of the vintage of 1826, a box of which the bridegroom had ordered to be sent to the house. In about a fortnight Mr. Müller is to take his spouse to Savannah.

It is so very hot just now that you ought to be glad that you are not in New York. However, the nights begin to be comfortably cool, and we had several cool days last week and probably shall have more next. Melons are plenty and pears have made their appearance. I suppose you will come down with your mother to help me eat them, and the peaches which we shall have soon. Remember me to all my friends

Yrs affectionately
W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR 
ADDRESS: Miss Julia Bryant / Great Barrington / Massachusetts. 
POSTMARK: NEW-YORK / Aug / 7 
POSTAL ANNOTATION: single-paid / [12½?].

413. To Frances F. Bryant

New York Saturday August 14, 1841.

My dear Frances.

I got your letter only this morning. You ask what you shall do with the children. If you are to wait and make a visit to Sheffield, and another to Goshen [Connecticut], you may as well bring them with you. It is already the middle of August, and you could hardly get here before the beginning of September. The weather it is true is rather warm, but the nights are cool and Julia I am sure would be as well here as in the country. As to Fanny we could find a place for her somewhere I dare say—I could not go with her to Cattskill, because Mr. Cole is gone to Europe—nor in fact could I go with her any where else, for Mr. Godwin, as you know I suppose, is not at home, and I do not know when he will be.

I expected you would return as early as the middle of this month; but somehow it is always my fate to expect you a great deal earlier than I
ought. When you do come I shall be glad to see you. I have the whole house to myself, and the whole city too, for there is scarce a soul in it whom I know. Mr. Sedgwick is yet at the Virginia Springs. The Forrests are at Niagara. The Paynes are at Newport. The Deweys are you know where. I walk about in dry places like the evil spirit in the New Testament.¹

Mean time, I leave you to arrange the matter of the children according to your own judgment and their inclinations, only remember that I shall be very glad to see you and them when your visiting is fairly over. I have been at work here alone for more than three weeks and am somewhat fagged. Mr. Boggs is gone on a journey to Ohio, and this adds a little to my cares and labours, though not very much.² I am going this afternoon to Oyster Bay to remain till Monday morning. Mrs. Holland with the two young ladies and Joseph⁵ went some days since to Saratoga and have since taken a journey to the western part of the state, probably to Niagara. I send Julia by the same mail that brings this letter a copy of the New World of today.⁴ Tell her that Merry's Museum⁵ for July and August did not come to the office—You must understand that she has written to me for books &c.

My love to the children; and my regards to all my friends.

Yrs truly & affectionately

WM C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR ADDRESS: Mrs. Frances F. Bryant / Great Barrington / Massachusetts postmark: NEW-YORK / AUG / 14 postal annotation: single—paid—/[12½?].


2. By May 16, 1841, William G. Boggs (see 341.2) owned four-tenths of the EP shares, with Bryant holding five-tenths, and Parke Godwin, Bryant's editorial assistant, had been admitted to the firm with a one-tenth share, for which he assumed a debt of something over $3,000. "Evening Post Accounts," NYPL-GR.

3. Unidentified.

4. The New World, one of the several new eclectic literary weeklies which filled their long columns largely with pirated foreign fiction, was then also running a series of "Literary Portraits," of which the first, on April 24, 1841, was a laudatory article on Bryant, accompanied by a full-length pen and ink likeness.

5. Merry's Museum and Parley's Magazine, 1841–1872, was founded and for long edited by Samuel Griswold Goodrich (1793–1860) under the pseudonym "Robert Merry." He was more widely known, however, as "Peter Parley," the supposed author or editor of 170 tales for children, of which 7,000,000 copies were sold.

414. To Richard H. Dana

New York September 14 1841

My dear sir

I have thought of visiting Boston next week. Will you be at home?
Will it be convenient for you to receive me? Answer these questions frankly; for it will be no inconvenience for me to postpone my journey—and in fact no inconvenience for me not to make it at all; except that I should miss the advantage of seeing you and my other friends in Boston and its neighborhood. I should not stay more than a week, probably not so long.

I was absent on my western journey two months. My wife and daughter I left in Ontario County and towards the latter part of August they returned to me, Fanny much better, and my wife very well.

Will you do me the favour to answer this by return of mail—and if you have a room for me, tell me your street and number? My best regards to your family and believe me

Yrs faithfully
WM C. BRYANT

Ans. / Sept. 15th.

1. Dana replied the next day with an invitation to visit him at his seaside vacation home at Rockport on Cape Ann, which he described beguilingly: "... Woods and waters, waters and woods; beautiful woods, and mossy, filled with birds all song, and again jagged and lofty rocks, and breakers on the shore, or under the trees of oak, pine, and maple. ..." Quoted from undated letter [September 15, 1841] in Life, I, 390.

415. To Richard H. Dana

New York Sept 25, 1841.

My dear sir

Since you will have it so, I shall bring one of my family with me, but in consequence of some household arrangements which my wife is obliged to make I shall not be able to come till next week. Next week therefore—some day after Wednesday you may look for Mrs. Bryant and myself.

Fanny you will be glad to hear, is still growing better. A friend of hers Miss Dewey who goes to Europe about the beginning of October has come to pass a fortnight with her, and they will keep house during our absence. Remember me kindly to your sister and daughters and thank them in my name and Mrs. Bryant's for their hospitable invitation.

Yrs truly
WM C. BRYANT


1. Mary E. Dewey, daughter of Bryant's friend Orville Dewey, who was taking his family abroad while he sought a cure from poor health through travel.
416. To Oscar T. Keeler

New York Sept 30 1841.

Sir

I correspond very little with the class of persons mentioned in your note, but I find lying on my table the enclosed note of Mr. Calhoun to an acquaintance of mine which you may like to add to your collection.

I am sir
Yr obt. Servt
WM C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: DuU

ADDRESS: Oscar T. Keeler Esq / 33 William Street / New York.

1. Mr. Keeler was presumably a young and rather persistent autograph collector; see Cooper, Letters & Journals, VI, 329–330. His note to Bryant is unrecovered.

417. To Richard H. Dana

New York October 18 1841.

My dear sir

"Is that shower over yet?" as somebody who had visited England, said to an Englishman whom he met a year or two afterwards. We slid into fine weather in a few hours after leaving your hospitable roof and friendly circle. When we got to Norwich [Connecticut] the moon was rising among scattered clouds, and the next morning, between four and five o'clock when I came on deck she was shining gloriously from the mid heaven on which there was not a shade of vapour.

The book you destined for Cooper, I found on inquiring of the Harpers had not been sent, for want as they said of an opportunity. I brought it away intending to find one myself. Two days afterwards Cooper walked into the office of the Evening Post and I put it into his hands.¹

I am glad you have accepted the invitation to deliver a lecture in Baltimore. You will come to my house in going of course and on your return.

I shall certainly think of Rockport next summer. I am too much of a land-lubber and want to become better acquainted with the sea. Fanny's health was astonishingly improved by a short residence on the water side and sea bathing, just before our visit to Boston. Remember me very cordially to your cheerful sisters, and to your daughter who puts so much soul into her singing, and to your clever elder and waggish younger son,² not forgetting your agreeable daughter in law— This is a compliment—such as it is—for each of them. My wife also desires me to assure you all of her remembrance of the kind attentions which made her visit to Boston so pleasant to her.

Yrs truly
WM C. BRYANT.
418. To Jeremiah H. Good and H. B. Shuford

New York Nov. 6 1841

Gentlemen

Your letter informing me of my election as an honorary member of the Go[ethean Society is before me. Will you do me the favour to communicate to your association my acceptance, and my thanks for the high compliment implied in admitting me as your colleague in the pursuit of the important objects which are enumerated in your letter.²

I am, gentlemen,
very respectfully
Yr Obt. Servt
WM C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: Franklin and Marshall College Library
ADDRESS: Messrs. J. H. Good / H. B. Shuford / Committee.

1. Jeremiah Haak Good (1822–1888), then a student at Marshall (later Franklin and Marshall) College at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, was ordained a German Reformed clergyman, taught theology at Heidelberg College, Tiffin, Ohio, and was president of Heidelberg Theological Seminary from 1869 to 1887. Shuford is unidentified.

2. Bryant responds here to a letter dated October 30, 1841 (Homestead Collection), which is typical of many he received from college literary societies during the 1830s and 1840s. Most writers asked him to appear before their groups to read a poem composed for some special occasion. At least twenty such invitations, most of which are in the Homestead Collection, came to him during the years 1840–1846 alone. Among the colleges and universities represented were Amherst, Columbian (now George Washington), Dartmouth, Geneva (now Hobart), Gettysburg, Hamilton, Hampden Sidney, Jefferson (now Washington and Jefferson), Lafayette, New Jersey (now Princeton), Oglethorpe, Ohio, Tennessee, Union, Vermont, Wabash, Wake Forest, Wesleyan, Wittlenberg, and Yale. Among the most interesting—certainly the most amusing—was one from the Cliosophic Society at Princeton in which, while he was told of his election to its exclusive membership, and of its “prosperous condition” in a “splendid and commodious building,” he was given no hint of its purposes, because, “the internal regulations of this society are sealed exclusively to the initiated—: it were therefore impossible in this communication to give particulars.” In conclusion, he was warned, “If . . . you have received & accepted a similar offer of membership from the American Whig Society connected with this college, this election is of course null, as it is impossible to belong to both.” Letter from T[heodore] L[edyard] Cuyler, August 31, 1839, Homestead Collection. Bryant’s reply—if any—to this mystifying communication is unrecovered.
419. To John Howard Bryant  

New York, November 23, 1841.

Dear Brother

I cannot find your "New England Pilgrim's Burial" anywhere. To look it up in the Evening Post would require a vast deal of time. Will you send it to me? I hope it will arrive in time, for it is one of your best.¹

Mr. Griswold has asked me to give some brief account of your life and I have promised to do so. Will you take the trouble to give me in your letter some of the principal events and dates of your life, so that if they do not reach me too late I can use them.

Your letter about the seasons of Illinois was much admired, as a piece of beautiful description and harmonious prose.²

I am thinking of putting my own verses such as have not been collected, into a little volume and publishing them this winter.³

Write me as soon as you receive this. My regards to your family and to all my friends.

Yrs truly

Wm C Bryant

Manuscript: NYHS.

¹. This poem was printed in Rufus Griswold's The Poets and Poetry of America (Philadelphia, 1842).

². On Saturday, October 23, the EP had carried a letter dated Princeton, Illinois, October 11, 1841, which described the weather and seasons in Illinois, and which was prefaced by the comment, "Our correspondent in Illinois has continued to favor us, by sending the following beautiful and interesting letter." An earlier letter from Princeton in EP for September 1, on the recent election in Illinois, was almost certainly from John Bryant.


420. To Orville Dewey

New York, January 11, 1842.

I fully meant to have seen you off on your sailing for Europe, but I arrived at the wharf just in time, as the saying is, to be too late.¹ The steamboat had left the wharf a few minutes before, and I had nothing to do but to go back again, feeling, as you may suppose, very silly. No less, I am glad to hear such good accounts of you and your family; for your acquaintances here gather up and repeat to each other all the particulars that are told in the letters that any of you write. You are now, I suppose, immersed in the amusements of Paris—such of them, at least, as you have a taste for; wearying yourself, and your wife and daughter, with running after sights, with a comfortable and cheerful home awaiting you when you are fairly tired out. New York, in the mean time, is by no means dull, I can assure you. You are in Paris to be sure, but you must not sup-
pose that everything worth taking an interest in is to be found at Paris. You shall judge.

Firstly. There is animal magnetism, which, since the publication of the Rev. Mr. Towns[h]end's book, has made great progress in America, in New York and elsewhere. It is quite the fashion for people to paw each other into a magnetic sleep. Physicians somnambulize their patients and extract teeth literally without pain.

A Dr. Buchanan, at Louisville, mixes up phrenology and animal magnetism, puts certain faculties to sleep and excites others, operates upon alimentiveness and makes people hungry, upon destructiveness and makes them choleric, upon ideality and makes them talk poetically, upon mirthfulness and makes them pleasant, upon love of approbation and makes them put on airs; or paralyzes one of those organs after the other, and makes the choleric man imperturbably good-natured, the funny man as stupid as an oyster, etc.

Secondly. There is Lord Morpeth, the Irish Secretary in the late Whig ministry. Dinners and parties to Lord Morpeth have been all the rage till within a few days, but they have now become impossible by reason of his going to Washington. Proud and happy is the man who can boast to have entertained a live lord. Lord Morpeth is a quiet, well-bred, unassuming man, with an awkward person, sensible, extremely cautious in his opinions, and not much given to talk.

Thirdly. There are politics, which are particularly interesting just now; your good old Whig party breaking up like the ice in March; the political world taking a short turn and darting off into the empyrean of democracy as if it never meant to come back; but all this you will read in the newspapers.

Fourthly. There is homoeopathy, which is carrying all before it. Conversions are making every day. Within a twelvemonth the number of persons who employ homoeopathic physicians has doubled; a homoeopathic society has been established, and I have delivered an inaugural lecture before it—a defence of the system, which I am to repeat next week. The heathen rage terribly, but their rage availeth nothing.

Fifthly. There is literature, which is just now bursting into an abundance of blossoms—poetic blossoms, you understand. Mr. Sigourney has published a volume of poems, Miss Gould another, Mrs. S. B. Dana another, Flaccus—I do not know his real name—another, and there are five or six poets besides whose verses have appeared since you left America, but whose names I do not recollect. I hope their verses are all good; I have not had time to read any of them. Longfellow has published "Ballads and other Poems"—some of his best things. Add to these the verses in the "Lady's Book" and the "Ladies Companion," periodicals with a vast circulation; in the "Ladies' Wreath," and in Mrs. Griffith's "Family Companion"; in half a score of annuals and other miscellanies, and you will
allow that our poetic literature is marvellously productive. The hedges are full of clover-blossoms, and you cannot set your foot down without crushing a buttercup.

Sixthly. We have lectures. Public lectures were never so much in vogue as this winter. The theatres are deserted for Mr. Eames and for Mr. Sparks, and for Dr. Lardner and the steam-engine.\textsuperscript{10} . . . I could tell you of many other matters of equal importance here. Our club (the Sketch Club) flourishes, meeting regularly, and entertaining itself more agreeably than ever—how? You know that already. But the end of my sheet is near, and I must stop. Now, what have you in Paris to set off against all these things? . . . If that iron hand is unclenched that used to take such cruel hold of your head, write me a line. Run off a few words at the end of your pen as you would do from the end of your tongue if you should meet me in the street. . . .


1. See 415.1.


3. Dr. Joseph Rodes Buchanan (1814–1899), an eccentric Kentucky physician, lectured and published treatises on such healing sciences of his own invention as "Sarcognomy" and "Psychometry." In 1843 he described his system in The Phrenological Portion of Neurology.

Several years earlier Bryant had occasionally found himself in the company of the leading phrenologist of the day, the Scotsman George Combe (1788–1858), founder of the British Phrenological Society and the Phrenological Journal, who spent nearly two years in the United States in 1838–1840 lecturing and meeting many prominent Americans. After first seeing Bryant on November 19, 1838, Combe recorded an analysis of his rather wary subject: "He is a thin man, nervous & bilious in temperament, & has a high anterior lobe, the middle region & wonder & [Initiative?] predominating. The forehead in consequence looks narrow. He is a shy man, and obviously looked at me with a mixture of suspicion & apprehension; probably unknown to himself. I afterwards returned his call, & he called again for me, & I again for him, but he never asked me to visit him, or manifested any desire to become personally acquainted with me. His newspaper is the leading democratic print of New York, and as his party has just lost the ascendency in New York State, it is said that he is chagrined and disappointed." From Combe's MS Journal, volume I, in National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. Among Bryant's intimate friends whose crania Combe also analyzed—and more sympathetically—were Catharine Sedgwick and Orville Dewey.

4. Bryant's favorable impression of Viscount Morpeth (George William Frederick Howard, seventh Earl of Carlisle, 1802–1864), a poet and a member of the British Parliament, was shared by other American literary men, including Halleck, Prescott, and Ticknor. Longfellow, however, seems to have been most impressed by the visiting nobleman's "fiery waistcoat." Adkins, Halleck, p. 297; Longfellow, Letters, II, 376–377, 385. It is probable that Bryant met Viscount Morpeth at a meeting of the Sketch Club, which often entertained visiting artists and writers.

5. John Tyler (1790–1862), a former Democrat elected to the vice presidency as a Whig in 1840, had succeeded to the presidency when William Henry Harrison died in April 1841, one month after his inauguration. Tyler, a strong States' Rights man, was
soon at odds with Senator Henry Clay and his nationalist wing of the Whig party. When he vetoed Clay's bill establishing a national bank, in August 1841, he was sharply attacked in the Congress by members of his own party; a crowd of drunken Whigs protested at the White House; and Tyler was burned in effigy. The next month the entire cabinet, with the exception of Secretary of State Daniel Webster, resigned.

William E. Ames, *A History of the National Intelligencer* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972), pp. 259–260, 262. The Democrats, particularly of their radical wing, to which the *EP* adhered, were delighted. After the troubles of early August Bryant wrote gleefully, "The leaven of discord is already in the mass, and the fermentation will go on wherever you put it. There is a glass toy in the form of a tadpole, called Prince Rupert's drop, of which if you break the smaller end, the rest flies in pieces. The whig party is in the condition of the Prince Rupert's drop after the smaller end is broken; nothing can stop it from going to pieces. The slight connection that held the different portions together, the feeling of having been engaged in a common cause, and of reluctance to take the first step in an open quarrel, is dissolved, and the party dissolves with it." *EP*, August 30, 1841.


8. These publications were probably Mrs. L. H. Sigourney (1791–1865), *Pocahontas, and Other Poems* (New York, 1841); Mrs. H. F. Gould (1789–1865), *Poems* (Boston, 1839–1841); Mary S. B. Dana (1810–1883), *The Parted Family and Other Poems* (New York & Boston, 1842); and Thomas Ward (1807–1873), *Passaic, A Group of Poems Touching that River . . .* by Flaccus (New York, 1842).

9. Published at Cambridge in December 1841.

10. Rev. Jared Sparks was a Unitarian minister whose career was devoted largely to the writing of history and biography; see 110.1. In the fall of 1841 he gave a highly popular series of lectures at the New-York Historical Society on the American Revolution. Vail, *Knickerbocker Birthday*, p. 86. Rev. Dionysius Lardner (1801–1879), an English scientific writer, lectured in the United States between 1840 and 1845. Eames may have been Theodore Eames, a popular lecturer since he addressed the first public meeting of the Brooklyn Lyceum in 1833.

421. *To Guliun C. Verplanck*  

[c]January 1842

My dear Sir

I understand that you are one of the persons who have the letting of the room in the Atheneum Building now occupied by the Exchange Lyceum. I called this morning to speak with you about taking it for the Apollo Association.1 If you should be down town tomorrow would it be too much trouble to call a moment at the office of the Evening Post?

Your truly

W. C. BRYANT


1. In December 1841 Bryant and two other members of the Sketch Club, Jonathan Sturges (1802–1874) and Charles Leupp (1807–1859), both generous friends of Ameri.
can art as well as prosperous businessmen, were elected to the executive committee of the Apollo Association for the Promotion of the Fine Arts, a three-year-old subscription organization then languishing for the lack of public support. Within two years they revitalized this institution as the American Art Union. See William Cullen Bryant II, "Poetry and Painting: A Love Affair of Long Ago," American Quarterly, 22 (Winter 1970), 866–867.

422. To Thomas W. White

New York March 19 1842

My dear sir.

The bearer of this letter is Mr. John Graham, of whose reputation as a poet you must have heard, and who visits the South for the purpose of obtaining subscriptions to an edition of his poems which he is about to publish. He has desired of me a letter of introduction to some person in your city, and I know of none to whose kindness I would more readily recommend him, both as respects his literary character, and his merits as a man than to yourself.

I am sir
Yours with great respect
Wm C. Bryant.

Manuscript: McGill University Library
Address: T. W. White Esq. / Editor of the / Southern Literary Messenger / Richmond / Virginia.

1. Thomas Wylkes White (1788–1843) was editor of the Southern Literary Messenger from 1837 to 1843. He was an early friend of Poe's and published his tales. See Southern Literary Messenger, 9 (February 1843), 65.


423. To Washington Irving

New York April 8th 1842

My dear sir

A friend of mine has desired of me a letter of introduction to you for the bearer Mr. John McIlveeny who goes out to Europe in the Packet ship Independence.

He is a native of Ireland and is represented to me as an intelligent well-educated gentleman, of the highest respectability of character.

As he has no acquaintances among the passengers of the Independence and is very desirous of the honor of knowing you personally, I am sure you will excuse the liberty I have taken.

Yrs. faithfully
Wm C Bryant

Manuscript: CHPL
Address: Washington Irving Esq. / &c &c &c. Endorsed (by Irving?): Wm C. Bryant / April 8. 1842 / — / The Poet / —.
1. On April 10, 1842, Washington Irving sailed from New York on the Independence to assume his new post as minister to Spain, where he would remain for the next four years. Williams, Spanish Background, I, 81. John McIlveeny has not been further identified.

424. To Richard H. Dana

My dear sir.

You were right in what you said of Dickens; I liked him hugely; though he was so besieged while he was here that I saw little of him—little in comparison with what I could have wished. It was a constant levee with him; he was obliged to keep an amanuensis to answer notes and despatches that came and went made me almost think that I was breakfasting with a minister of state.¹

We were all much disappointed at not seeing you in New York last winter. By we—I mean not only my household but the public, which includes a host of your admirers. So far as I am concerned I shall endeavour to make myself amends by seeing you at Gloucester in the month of July, if there can be found a place where my wife and I can bestow ourselves. You wrote to me that you should go down early to make your arrangements for the summer. Don't leave me out of your plans for I am quite in earnest. I must remain here until the fourth of July, and we may need two or three days after that to make ourselves ready, and then we will come on to Gloucester where you will I suppose have domesticated yourselves long before me.

I hope your daughter is fully recovered from the effects of her illness, and is on horseback again, or driving a gig, or engaged in some other exercise that pleases her and does her good. We had the scarlet fever in our family last winter, but not after the severe manner that you had it in yours. Julia was attacked with it in February, but the disorder had a happy issue, and in a fortnight she was out again. Nobody took it of her, except that Fanny had a kind of rash which did not, however, make her ill.

I am putting together my poems for a little volume. There are fifteen or sixteen of them, and they will make a book of eighty or ninety pages. Do you not mean to do something with your writings? Remember you owe me a volume. The copy of your Prose and Poetry which I lent to the New World never came back, you know.

My wife bids me apologize to your sister for not having yet answered her note. It came accompanied by the night-cap—not the wishing cap of Fortunatus as she professed to think it might be, for New York is no place to have things for the wishing. There is an old saying here: That if you would wish you should go to Boston, for you can get as much for one wish
there as you can for two here. My wife would answer your sister's pleasant letter by the same opportunity which brings you this, but she is now lying on the sofa; ill with a severe head ache, and can only send her thanks.

And with my wife's thanks we all of us desire our kindest regards to all your household.

Yrs. faithfully

WM. C. BRYANT


1. In 1842 Charles Dickens made the first of two visits to the United States, the second coming twenty-five years later. The popularity in this country of his early novels was then at its height, and brought him an almost frenzied welcome. He landed at Boston on January 22; after being feted there, and at Worcester, Springfield, Hartford, and New Haven, he arrived at New York on February 13. He appeared at a public ball at the Park Theatre the next evening, and on the 18th at a dinner in the City Hotel, where Washington Irving presided and Bryant was one of the hosts. On his first day in New York Dickens wrote Bryant a flattering note inviting him to breakfast at the Carlton House: "With one exception (and that's Irving) you are the man I most wanted to see in America. . . . I don't call to leave a card at your door before asking you, because I love you too well to be ceremonious with you. I have a thumbed book back at home, so well worn that it has nothing upon the back but one gilt 'B,' and the remotest possible traces of a 'y.' My credentials are in my earnest admiration of its beautiful contents." Letter dated February 14, 1842, NYPL-GR. They breakfasted, with Halleck, and perhaps Irving, present. The Bryants entertained Dickens and his wife at their home, and Bryant dined in company with him at least one other time before Dickens left New York, and again, at Dickens' invitation, when he returned to sail for home. Early in his visit the novelist presented to the poet six volumes of his writings, each inscribed "William Cullen Bryant, from his friend and admirer, Charles Dickens." In the EP of February 18 Bryant expressed warm praise of the visitor: "His sympathies seek out that class with which American institutions and laws sympathize most strongly. He has found subjects of thrilling interest in the passions, sufferings, and virtues of the mass. . . . We rejoice that a young man, without birth, wealth, title, or a sword, whose only claims to distinction are in his intellect and heart, is received with the feeling that was formerly rendered only to kings and conquerors. The author, by his genius, has contributed happy moments to the lives of thousands, and it is right that the thousands should recompense him for the gift." See Dickens to Bryant, February 27 and June 1, 1842, NYPL-GR; EP, February 15, 1842; Adkins, Halleck, 293–294; Life, I, 395–397; Odell, Annals, IV, 541; William Allen Butler, A Retrospect of Forty Years, 1825–1865, ed. Harriet Allen Butler (New York: Scribner, 1911), p. 94n.

425. To Robert C. Waterston

New York April 19 1842

My dear sir.

We, that is my wife and I, have read your book with great satisfaction. The profound and tender humanity, the

—"Strong benevolence of souls," which runs through the whole of it would make it delightful, even without the fine thoughts and agreeable style which belong to it.
I have copied, according to your desire the "Lines on Revisiting the Country" and enclose them. I shall think better of them, now that I have learned that you like them.

Yrs. truly

WM C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: UVa
ADDRESS: Rev. R. C. Waterston / Boston.

1. Rev. Robert Cassie Waterston (1812–1893) studied three years at Harvard and was ordained a Unitarian minister in 1839. He and his wife, Anna Cabot Lowell Quincy Waterston, daughter of President Josiah Quincy of Harvard, were later intimate friends of the Bryants'. AGAB; Robert C. Waterston, Tribute to William Cullen Bryant. At the Meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, June 13, 1878 (Boston, 1878), pp. 7–13, passim.

2. Thoughts on Moral and Spiritual Culture (Boston, 1842). Bryant praised this book in EP, April 9, 1842.

3. Quotation unidentified.


426. To Rufus W. Griswold

New York May 20 1842

My dear sir

I send you a poem for Graham's Magazine. I wish its merit were equal to the trouble it has given me—trouble arising, I believe, out of the peculiar metre I had chosen. I put no name to it—What shall I call it? It is supposed to be uttered by a young woman whose lover had died, some years before in the solitudes of the west. My wife suggested "The Maiden's Sorrow," but I do not like it—Can you think of a name for me?1

Yrs truly

WM C. BRYANT—

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–Berg
ADDRESS: R. W. Griswold Esq. / Editor of Graham's Magazine / Philadelphia
POSTMARK: NEW-YORK / MAY / 20
POSTAL ANNOTATION: [1842?].

1. This poem, in seven quatrains, is written in an unusually irregular 4-stress meter. It was first published, under the title Frances Bryant suggested, in Graham's, 21 (August 1842), 64. See Poems (1876), pp. 288–290. At some time before this letter was written Bryant had given Griswold an oral promise to contribute to Graham's, apparently asking $50 a poem. On June 19 the editor wrote that Mr. Graham, the publisher, "will gladly pay you the price mentioned to me ($50 per article), as often as you will write—or will give you $600 a year for a poem every month." NYPL–BG. Bryant's occasional contributions to Graham's over the next dozen years totaled sixteen poems, including four translated from the German.
427. To an Unidentified Correspondent

New York May 30 1842

My dear sir.

Excuse me for not having answered your note earlier. I have been looking for the constitution of the Homoeopathic society\(^1\) for the information of your friend Mr. Sampson,\(^2\) but I find that it has never been printed, and the Secretary of our association has taken a trip to Europe, so that I can not see it even in manuscript.

I can inform you however of the objects of our society. One is the establishment of a library of homoeopathic works, another the establishment of a homoeopathic dispensary for the poor,\(^3\) another the delivery of public lectures, and a fourth, in case of necessity, to concert means of defence against any attempt on the part of the allopathists to oppress the homoeopathic practitioners through the agency of the Medical Society which you know is an association established under the protection of the law.

The Homoeopathic Society comprises some wealthy men but it has done little as yet. The most zealous and active of our members Dr. Hull\(^4\) has been at death's door almost ever since I became a member of it, though fortunately he is now recovering; and the hard times have prevented any proposition[s] from being made which contemplate the spending of much money.

I quite agree with you about Peel's scheme, though the income tax is not exactly a just or an equal one.\(^5\) I am much flattered with Mr. Sampson's good opinion of my pamphlet.\(^6\)

Yrs truly

W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: Colby College Library.

1. See 420.6.
2. Unidentified.
3. The New York Homoeopathic Dispensary was opened by the Society in 1845, on Broadway below Canal Street. Wershub, *100 Years of Medical Progress*, p. 216.
4. See 405.4.
5. In 1842 Sir Robert Peel's ministry in the British Parliament introduced an income tax, with the resultant reduction or elimination of tariffs on many articles of foreign trade.

428. To William Ware

New York, May, 1842.

... As you are making a *bee* to furnish out the first number of your periodical in its new form, I shall contribute my assistance, such as it is,
along with the rest of your neighbors. You may rely upon my doing something. I am sorry to hear that the "Christian Examiner" is not so successful as it ought to be.¹ The cause to which you ascribe it is doubtless the true one—that of its having taken the review form, which is too solemn and didactic for the public taste. It is wonderful what success some of our magazines—the lighter sort—have had. The publishers of the "Lady's Book" and "Ladies Companion" talk, and I believe with truth, of their ten thousand subscribers and more. "Graham's Magazine" has also a very large circulation.² . . . I hope another cause of the falling off in the subscribers of the "Christian Examiner" is not any decline in the numbers of our denomination. Yet it must be admitted, I believe, that we do not multiply as we did a few years since. Is the increase of the Unitarians at the present time in proportion to the increase of the population? I am not able to judge with much precision. Betwixt the neologists on the one side, and the archaists on the other, I fear that sober and sensible notions of religion are not making much progress just now; at least, not in the shape in which they are received by us. . . .


1. William Ware owned the leading Unitarian periodical, the Christian Examiner, which he edited from 1839 to 1844. Bryant's contribution was "A Hymn of the Sea"; see Letter 436.
2. Graham's was reported in 1843 to have a circulation of over 100,000 copies.

429. To Richard H. Dana

New York June 1, 1842

My dear sir

I saw Mr. Keese this morning.¹ He is one of the most obliging men that ever lived, and holds you in great honour, and of course was much concerned at hearing that you supposed he had neglected to send you word of the conclusion to which the firm had come in regard to publishing your works. He commissioned Mr. Griswold he said to explain the matter fully to you. However, he will write to you and make his own apology. I talked with him freely about the subject of publishing your book. He will make inquiries among the trade, and will give you his best advice on the subject. Although the house in which he is concerned are not inclined to take the work, yet I am very certain that if he can serve you by pointing out any way in which the thing can be done he would be proud to do so, and would take a personal interest in the matter. When I mentioned that the Appletons required the copy right he said at once that it was absurd to think of your parting with it.

As to the place at Rockport, I should think there would not be much difficulty in obtaining a shelter for us for the short time we can stay.
Julia will of course come with us. I am not certain but a fortnight or three weeks will be as long as we can be absent though I hope to be able to stretch out the rustication beyond that time.²

You gave the true interpretation to my silence on another subject, so that there is no need of making any further explanation.³

I print my little volume at the office of the Evening Post.⁴ It was fortunate that I determined to do so, for the Harpers this morning have had their establishment, with nearly every thing it contained, destroyed by a fire. The building they say was fired purposely, for the doors appear to have been forced and the desks rifled. The object of the plunderer is supposed to have been, or at least the principal object, to obtain possession of a copy of James's new novel,⁵ which they either had in press, or had just received from the author for publication. The loss of the Harpers is estimated by them at about thirty thousand dollars, the insurance being only about forty thousand and the property destroyed worth about seventy thousand.⁶

Remember me to your sisters and your children.

Yrs. truly

WM C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR ADDRESS: R. H. Dana Esq. ENDORED: WM C. Bryant / June 1st/42 Ans. June / 7th / About printing / for me—& copy- / right.—

1. John Keese; see Letter 397.

2. In July and August 1842 the Bryants boarded for three weeks at Pigeon Cove, Rockport, Massachusetts, with a John W. Wheeler, near Dana's summer home. Frances Bryant, "Autobiographical Sketch," NYPL-GR.

3. Bryant probably alludes to the marriage, three weeks earlier, of twenty-year-old Fanny Bryant to Parke Godwin, which seems to have been accomplished without her parents' approval, and perhaps even without their knowledge—although the young couple had evidently been on affectionate terms for at least a year past. See Fanny Bryant to Parke Godwin, cJune 2, 1841, NYPL-GR. Within a month of the wedding, Godwin left the EP, and with his father-in-law's financial help, made a short-lived and costly attempt to start a Morning Post—a venture which cost the parent company more than $6,000. Peter G. Winkle to Parke Godwin, July 16?, 1842, NYPL-GR; "Evening Post Accounts," NYPL-GR; Letter 520.

4. The Fountain and Other Poems (New York, 1842), of which Wiley & Putnam were nominal publishers. Bryant's preface was dated July 1842.


430. To Richard H. Dana

New York July 21, 1842.

My dear sir.

I have been detained in New York by some business connected with my paper, or perhaps I should have been at Rockport ere this; —although
the wet and cool weather has not made me long so much for the country as I generally do at this season.

It is now my intention to leave New York on Monday next. Of course I shall arrive at Pigeon Cove the next day. It may happen, however, that I shall not set out until Tuesday.

Yrs truly
WM C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: L.H.

431. To Elias W. Leavenworth

New York    July 22    1842.

Dear sir

The bearer of this letter is Mr. W. S. Solomons who is making a tour in the interior of the state as the agent of the Apollo Association for the Improvement of the Fine Arts. I suppose you must be somewhat acquainted [with] the nature and objects of this society which is now placed on a more advantageous and useful footing than it has ever been before. Those by whom it is managed derive no other advantage from it than the pleasure of seeing a taste for the arts diffused and our deserving artists better rewarded.

You will do me a personal favour by indicating to Mr. Solomons who is a very active and efficient agent of our society such persons as you may think would be glad to become subscribers in your place, and by giving him such advice as may occur to you.

Yrs truly
WM C. BRYANT.


1. Elias Leavenworth (123.1), once Bryant's law clerk at Great Barrington, was now mayor of Syracuse, New York. BDAC.

2. Wellington S. Solomons was a competent and productive Travelling Agent for the Apollo Association and the American Art Union from 1841 to 1845. Cowdrey, AAFA & AAU, I, 111.

432. To Rufus W. Griswold

Rockport [Essex County Massachusetts]    August 3, 1842.

My dear sir.

I send you another poem for your magazine. I intended that you should have had it earlier, and in fact it was nearly completed a fortnight ago, but the tooth-ache and the cholera morbus &c &c. prevented me from finishing it. I shall probably stay here some ten days longer. Mr,
Dana is with me. I have been trying to persuade him that it is for his interest to send something to your periodical.

Yrs truly

WM. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: HEHL ADDRESS: REV. R. W. GRISWOLD.

1. The brackets are Bryant's.

433. To Richard H. Dana

New York September 1, 1842.

My dear sir

I have seen Wiley & Putnam¹ but without success. I first spoke with Mr. Keese; he happened in at my office almost as soon as I got home, and I took the opportunity of talking with him about the publication of your works. He had no doubt that they would do very well in the market, although he thought the badness of the times might make the booksellers unwilling to undertake the publication. When I mentioned the terms offered by Appleton, he said that you ought not to agree to any thing like them, and to my inquiry what per cent you ought to have on the sales he answered twenty. He offered to speak to Wiley & Putnam on the subject, and endeavour to prepare them for a negociation. When I spoke to him about the letter he should have written to you he said that his head had been so full of other things that he had forgot it. He has lost his wife's mother this summer, his wife has been ill, and a little boy of his has been for some time at the point of death in consequence of falling upon the spikes of an iron railing which entered his side.

I called in a few days afterwards upon Wiley and found that Keese had seen him. He said that he was sure the book would sell to some extent, that your literary reputation being established there must be buyers, but that the times were so dull that he had made up his mind to publish no works of that character at present. When I mentioned his readiness to publish for me, he said that in that case the risk was taken, and the expense incurred by me, which [was] with him a strong motive for undertaking it.² He said that if you did nothing with the work before spring he should be glad to hear from you again on the subject.

I am sorry that I can do nothing for you. I suppose there must be something in this complaint of hard times. Every body makes it, at least every body belonging to the trading class.

We are glad to hear that fine weather has returned to Pigeon Cove at last. Since we returned we have had a good deal of wet and sultry
weather, but the season is now fine—bright, and neither too hot nor too cool. Mrs. Bryant is all the better for her journey and her residence in your air, though it seemed to affect her unpleasantly for the time. Julia is beginning to lose the little plumpness she got at Rockport, and we think of sending her into the country again.

I am sorry, and so is my wife that we were not able to see any of the rest of your family while we were in Massachusetts. You say nothing of your daughter; I hope her eyes are better, and that the mesmeric treatment parries the attacks. Talking of Mesmerism—a friend of mine told me the other day that Mr. Jones whose name I think I mentioned to you had given him an account of some most remarkable communications he had held with the spirits of the dead, by means of mesmerism, and affirmed that they are constantly about us, taking an interest in our actions and welfare, and even our personal safety.

My regards to your daughter and Miss Metcalf. My wife desires her love to you all. Remember us also to Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler and the rest of the family. We envy your walks in the fresh woods and bushy and rocky pastures, and your little voyages on the quiet water, this fine weather. We tried to indemnify ourselves in some measure, for being without them, by going to Coney Island beach the other day. We bathed in the surf, but the New Yorkers were as thick as sand-fleas. Any news from Dogtown?

I saw Griswold today. He puts your verses in the November number, he says. The October number is made up and printed.

Yrs truly

Wm C Bryant


1. From 1840 to 1848 John Wiley (1808–1891) and George Palmer Putnam (1814–1872) were partners in the New York publishing business. Wiley was a son of Charles Wiley (142.2). After their partnership was dissolved, Putnam established the firm of G. P. Putnam & Sons, publishers of a number of Bryant’s books.

2. See 429.4.

3. Possibly the young magazine writer and critic William Alfred Jones (1817–1900, Columbia 1836), a close friend of Evert Duyckinck’s and Cornelius Mathews’, Bryant’s associates in organizing the American Copyright Club. See 471.2; Miller, Raven & Whale, p. 77.

4. From July 28 to August 16 the Bryants boarded at the Homestead, Pigeon Cove, on Cape Ann. A bill from the proprietor, John W. Wheeler, in the Homestead Collection, shows that Bryant paid $26 for “3 weeks board for self and wife and daughter.” Later in August they spent several days with the William Wares in Cambridge. Frances Bryant, “Autobiographical Sketch,” NYPL–GR.

5. This allusion is obscure.

6. “Song—'I Saw Her Once,'” Graham’s, 21 (November 1842), 256.
434. To Joseph L. Chester

Sept 7 1842

Sir.

I am very sure that I have never written the line of which you speak, nor any so like it that you could be accused of plagiarism.

Yrs. respectfully

WM C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: Haverford College Library address: J. L. Chester Esquire / 52 John Street docketed: WM C Bryant / Sept. 7/42.

1. Joseph Lemuel Chester (1821–1882), a merchant's clerk who published a volume of verse in 1843 under the pseudonym "Julian Cramer," was a journalist in Philadelphia from 1845 to 1858, when he moved to London to become a specialist in American genealogy. The verse line in question is unidentified.

435. To Joseph White Moulton

New York September 19 1842.

My dear sir

I was absent when your letter of the 29th of July came to the office, on a visit of several weeks to New England, and did not get it until my return, or it should have been answered immediately.

When I last saw you I mentioned that since my visit to your place I had been unexpectedly called upon to make out a considerable sum of money and I feared that this might put an end for the present to any plans of purchasing a place in the country. I find that the lapse of a few weeks has made things worse instead of better. I am in such a situation that it would not be prudent for me to embarrass myself with any new engagements for this year at least, and how much longer I may be obliged to postpone my plan I cannot now say.

If it were not for this, I should have been happy to accept your hospitable invitation, had I returned in season from the country. My compliments to Mrs. Moulton & believe me

Yrs truly

WM C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL—Bryant-Moulton Letters address: Joseph W. Moulton docketed: B / W C Bryant.

1. Joseph White Moulton (1789–1875), a New York lawyer and legal writer, had published several volumes on chancery practice, as well as a history of New York State. ACAB. In the mid-1830s he had bought property at Hempstead Harbor on Long Island Sound, and planned to make it an elaborate suburban development called "Montrose," which he advertised in the EP. See illustration. When the crash of 1837 and subsequent financial depression made this plan impracticable, he offered a portion of the property, containing an old farmhouse with fields and orchards, to Bryant as a country residence. See 447.1.
436. To William Ware

New York, September 27, 1842

... I made a blunder in the "Hymn of the Sea" which surprised me when I perceived it.

"The long wave rolling from the Arctic pole
To break upon Japan—"

is not what I meant; it does not give space enough for my wave, nor does it place my new continent or new islands in the widest and loneliest part of the ocean. I meant the Southern or Antarctic pole, and by what strange inattention to the meaning of the word I came to write Arctic I am sure I cannot tell. I corrected the error and published the poem in the "Evening Post," as extracted from the "Christian Examiner." It has been in most of the newspapers since, but I perceive they copied from my copy.\(^1\) ... 


1. "A Hymn of the Sea," written on Cape Ann in August, was published in the *Christian Examiner*, 32 (September 1842), 95–96, and in the *EP* September 5. See *Poems* (1876), p. 294, for Bryant's revision, "The long wave rolling from the southern pole. ..." This was a rare—perhaps unique—instance of Bryant's composing verses suggested by someone else. Ware had written him at Pigeon Cove urging the Bryants to stop in Cambridge on their way home, adding, "You were good enough to promise me somewhat for my Sept. number. ... You once wrote for me your 'Hymn of the City' than which there are not many things in your volume that speak to me on a higher tone." Letter dated August 8, 1842, NYPL-GR. The "Hymn of the City" (*Poems* [1876], pp. 183–184) was first published in 1830 in the *Christian Examiner*.

437. To George Bancroft\(^1\)

New York  October 1, 1842

My dear sir

The bearer of this letter is Mr. W. S. Solomons, who visits your city as the agent of our Society for the Promotion of the Fine Arts. It is an association of the same nature with those which are doing so much in Great Britain under the name of Art-Unions, and in Germany under that of Kunstvereine. We have lately put it on a new footing, so that all the subscriptions received are rigidly applied to the purchase of pictures for distribution among the members, and for the annual engraving of some choice specimen of American painting.\(^2\)

As one of the Executive Committee I shall feel obliged to you if you will give Mr. Solomons any advice which may facilitate his object in visiting Boston, namely to obtain subscribers to the association.

Yrs truly

WM C. BRYANT
MANUSCRIPT: MHS ADDRESS: GEO. BANCROFT ESQ.

1. Although he had lost his post as Collector of the Port of Boston with the inauguration of Whig President Harrison in 1841, George Bancroft, busy writing the third volume of his History of the United States and editing the Bay State Democrat, remained the leader of the Massachusetts Democratic Party. He and Bryant, casual friends since their literary association in 1825-1826 (Letters 135–136, 140), were beginning to be coupled in bitter attacks made on radical Democrats by political conservatives. "Freedom of opinion! Where is it?" Charles Dickens asked disgustedly after visiting Boston and New York in 1842; "I see a press more mean, and paltry, and silly, and disgraceful than [in] any country I ever knew. . . . I speak of Bancroft, and am advised to be silent on that subject, for he is a ‘black sheep—a Democrat.’ I speak of Bryant, and am entreated to be more careful, for the same reason." Letter to William C. Macready, March 22, 1842, in The Letters of Charles Dickens, edd. Georgina Hogarth and Mamic Dickens, 3 vols. (London: Chapman & Hall, 1880–1882), I, 61.

2. During its first three years of operation the Apollo Association had lost money mounting a number of formal exhibitions at set periods, and found itself as well in competition with the National Academy of Design. Early in 1842 Bryant’s committee discontinued these costly exhibits, substituting for them a perpetual free gallery open to the general public. Cowdrey, AAFA & AAU, I, 201–205. The annual engraving for 1843 was William Sidney Mount’s highly successful genre painting “Farmers Nooning,” owned by Bryant’s associate on the Committee of Management Jonathan Sturges. Ibid., 287.

438. To Richard H. Dana

New York October 20 1842.

My dear sir.

I do not see why you should not come immediately to my house when you make your visit to New York. We have one room unoccupied in which there is a fire place, and you might see whether you could not make yourself comfortable in it during your stay here. If you could not, we might then look about for a place more to your mind. Meantime, our patients make the least disturbance possible. To be ill, if you are treated in the homoeopathic way is the next thing to being well. We have no watching at night, in the present case I mean, no effluvium of medicines, nothing of the offensiveness and nauseousness of sickness, nor of the constant nursing and waiting which usually belongs to it. The two sick persons I think have begun to mend within a few days past, and I hope will be well by the time you arrive. As soon as they can get out of the house, they will try the effect of a change of air.1 I think therefore, and so does Mrs. Bryant that the best thing we can do for you is to do nothing, but make you come directly to our house.

Mr. Wiley said to me casually yesterday that he wished to speak to me about the publication of your works. He has had a conversation with Griswold, and I believe also with Keese, and having had some assurances that a considerable portion of the edition would be taken off his hands, begins to be willing to publish. I shall talk over the matter with him, and
shall also consult with Mr. Keese, but unless he is urgent for an immediate close of the bargain perhaps it will be better to postpone that till you arrive. Remember me kindly to your sisters and children and to Miss Metcalf if she is still with you.

Yrs truly
W C. BRYANT

P. S. My wife was about to add a few words to say how well she would be pleased if you would come immediately to 326 Ninth Street, and how she would try to make you comfortable, and tell you frankly if she could not, and should insist upon equal frankness from you if you did not find yourself so, and all the other things which a woman knows how to say upon such an occasion, but I am in great haste and cannot stop for her to do it. She desires her love to you all.

W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR ENDOURED: W. C. Bryant Oct / 30/42 Ans Novr 3rd.²

1. Fanny Godwin and her husband were then ill at her parents' home; see Letter 440.
2. Dana's reply, presumably dated November 3, is unrecovered.

439. To Julia S. Bryant

New York Nov. 6 1842

My dear Julia.

I suppose you are deep in your studies, busy with your books from morning to night, or else you would find time to write to your pauvre papa. Do not ruin your health, I beg of you. Take a little exercise now and then, a little diversion; do not give up play altogether; do not always sit mewed up in the chimney corner; it will spoil your eyes and make your limbs weak and your brains muddy. At least spare time enough from your attention to learning to write me a line now and then.

Your mother and I are very impatient to see you. Your visit I hope will be out soon, and one day's ride on the rail road will bring you to us. Remember me to your uncle and aunt and all my friends.

Yrs affectionately
Wm C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR ADDRESS: Miss Julia Bryant / Great Barrington.

440. To Richard H. Dana

New York Nov. 7, 1842

My dear sir

My physician has the highest opinion of Dr. Okie, and says that he will not think of prescribing for your daughter's eyes unless he sees a
strong possibility of relieving her—that he is intelligent and judicious—that he was regularly educated in the old school of medicine, and followed that method for several years but at length abandoned it for the new, which he has studied with great fidelity. I have some of the translations of Dr. Okie, but until now have not heard much of him as a practitioner. I regard the recommendation of Dr. Hull, however, and his partner Dr. Gray, both of whom have been enquired of, and both of whom agree in this character of Dr. Okie, as sufficient.

If your daughter places herself under his care I hope that she will not only take his medicines, but observe most strictly his directions as to regimen, without which they will have no effect. In a chronic malady like hers a great deal of patient waiting for the full operation of the medicines will be necessary, and she must make up her mind to refrain month after month from the prohibited articles of diet. If she means to recover her health in this way she can no more indulge in little departures from the strict diet, than a man who means to be thought honest can indulge in little lies.

My wife and I meant all we said in the last letter you had from me and even more. Godwin is nearly well; Fanny is getting better though slowly; she is yet weak and does not sit up, but every day alleviates her symptoms and makes her stronger, and we shall make you tolerably comfortable, I dare say. If we do not, you must say so; and if we find that we cannot without great inconvenience, we shall deal with you frankly, and say so.

I am going today to see Mr. Keese about the publication of your works. I shall take his opinion on all the matters you mention in your letter.

My regards to all. My wife sends hers. Tell Charlotte that I am glad she has made up her mind to be cured. When we next meet I expect to see her “drinking with undazzled eyes the full mid-day beam.”

Yrs. truly

WM C. BRYANT


1. Among such translations by Dr. Abraham Howard Okie of Providence, Rhode Island, were Practical Observations on Some of the Chief Homoeopathic Remedies, by Dr. Franz Hartmann. Translated from the German, with Notes (Philadelphia & London, 1841–1846), and Ruoff’s Repertory of Homoeopathic Medicine, Nosologically Arranged. Translated from the German. 2d Amer. Ed. (New York, 1845).

2. Cf. Milton, Areopagitica: “Methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam.”
441. To James Fenimore Cooper

New York Nov. 30, 1842

My dear Sir

Miss Teresa Salazar, the daughter of two old acquaintances of mine, natives of Spain, is at the school of Miss Spafard in your neighbourhood, partly as a pupil and partly as a teacher of French. I have known her from her infancy, and take a great interest in her welfare. I therefore take the liberty of writing to you to bespeak for her, in case any occasion should call for them, such acts of kindness as a young girl, who has no friends in the country except such as her amiable character procures for her, may stand in need of. I have been told that your family interest themselves in the success of Miss Spafard's school. Miss Salazar speaks the French language fluently and gracefully, but her knowledge of its literature is of course very small, and if yourself or the ladies of your family in your visits to the school were to give her any advice in regard to her reading in the French language I know that it would be received most gratefully.

My compliments to Mrs. Cooper and to the young ladies whom I saw at your house half a dozen years since at New York.

Yrs truly

WM C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL—Thomas F. Madigan Collection

1. See 198.6, 316.6.
3. The Coopers had four unmarried daughters, all then in their twenties. Ibid., I, 23–25. No reply from Cooper to this letter has been found.

442. To Richard H. Dana

New York Nov. 30, 1842

My dear Sir—

It is my fate generally to give you ill news. When I wrote you last I was just going to talk with Mr. Keese concerning the publication of your writings by Wiley & Putnam. I saw Mr. Keese, and Mr. Keese saw Wiley and I thought that every thing was in a train for a bargain, when calling on Wiley I was told by him that he had just received a letter from Mr. Putnam, the purport of which was that he was against publishing the book and that the design must be given up.

Now, you may possibly say to me that you are sorry you put me to so much trouble, and all that—but I beg you to say no such thing, for the trouble was not greater than that of once going to market, and I wish
it had been twenty times as much so it had been productive of some benefit to you. The only disagreeable thing about it is that it came to such an abrupt conclusion.

Your writings, however, are to be published yet, and ere long too. The booksellers are all in a state of alarm at the increase of cheap publications—republications of English books in a newspaper form, which take the place of the regular editions they used to publish and are sent by mail all over the country on payment of newspaper postage. Three or four publishers of the great weeklies have almost driven the regular booksellers out of the market. The consequence is that within a few months past they have changed their opinions in regard to a general copyright law. Carey of Philadelphia, and the Harpers and Carvills here, and I am told hundreds of others, all very lately hostile to such a law are now very zealous in its favour.

The influence of these men, more I think than any other cause has prevented such a law from being passed hitherto. We shall have it now, after which fair editions of books will begin to be published again, and American authors will not be so completely shoved aside by the flood of trash from Europe.²

My regards to your sisters and children & believe me

Truly yrs.

W. C. BRYANT

P. S. Fanny is better and begins to ride out. Godwin is well.


1. At this time George Palmer Putnam was the firm's London representative. Lehmann-Haupt, The Book in America, p. 127.

2. In 1842–1843 the American book trade was in virtual chaos in the publishing centers of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. Weekly newspapers of inflated size, such as the Brother Jonathan and the New World of New York, were printing on newsprint cheap folio and quarto editions of foreign novels for which they paid no royalties, scattering them widely through the mails at minimal postage rates, and hawking them with showy posters and noisy street parades, for as little as 6¼¢ a copy. Works of the best and worst contemporary foreign novelists were indiscriminately “pirated”—Ainsworth, Balzac, Bulwer-Lytton, Dickens, G. P. R. James, Lever, Lover, Marryat, and Rodolphe Töpffer, along with John Yonge Akerman, Charles Paul de Kock, and William Johnson Neale. The huge circulation of these flimsy paper pamphlets forced trade book prices down to their level; the Harpers' Library of Select Novels, which had sold for a decade at $1.00 or $1.50 a volume, were reissued in 1842 as the Library of Popular Novels at 25¢. The Harpers were constrained to offer new novels for as little as 12¼¢! See Bryant II, "The Middle Years," pp. 213–215, and "The Brother Jonathan and its Extra Novels: A Study of the Mammoth Literary Weeklies, 1839–1845," unpublished M.A. thesis, Columbia University, 1940, pp. 44–66.
443. To Richard H. Dana, Jr.

New York Nov. 30, 1842.

My dear sir

I have not heard from your father since I learned that he was so ill as to call a physician. Not knowing what may be the state of his health at this time I have thought it would be well to enclose you a note that I have written to him concerning the ill success of my negotiations for the publication of his works, that if he be not recovered you might read it and judge whether it should be handed to him until he is better.

Yrs truly

WM C. BRYANT


444. To John Franklin Gray


My dear sir.

I saw Mr. Butler long since—but I found him engaged to give his name to somebody else for the office of Resident Physician. I send you however my letter to Bouck.

Yrs. truly

WM. C BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: LC ADDRESS: Dr. J. F. Gray.

1. Dr. John Franklin Gray (1804–1882? College of Physicians and Surgeons 1826) was an early convert in New York City to the homoeopathic system of medicine, and took a leading part in founding the New York Medical College in 1860, and the Hahnemann Hospital in 1869. Wershub, 100 Years of Medical Progress, pp. 12–13, 130–131; undated (EP?) obituary, NYPL–GR. See 405.4.

2. Probably Benjamin Franklin Butler (1795–1858), recently United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and influential in Democratic politics, who was a personal friend of Bryant's. Bryant's letter to the newly elected Democratic governor of New York State, William C. Bouck (1786–1859), is unrecovered.

3. It is uncertain for what position Dr. Gray was then applying. The obituary article cited above (Note 1) states that after he "adopted the principles of Hahnemann" in 1829, "his practice fell off, and it was a long struggle before the popular prejudice against homoeopathy was overcome."

445. To George Bancroft

Dec. 22 1842.

My dear sir.

I called yesterday at the Astor House partly for the purpose of saying to you that the meeting of the Sketch Club to which I invited you this evening does not take place. The member at whose house we were to meet is one of the New England Society and dines with them. I was sorry
that I could not, on account of your absence, make my excuses verbally.

What a trap you caught me in, Tuesday evening!

Yrs truly

WM C. BRYANT


1. Bancroft, who was then making a lecture tour of the Middle Atlantic states, filled the Broadway Tabernacle in New York on the evenings of December 19 and 20, speaking on “The Political Condition of the European World Prior to the Revolution.” On the 22nd he appeared before the Hamilton Literary Association in Brooklyn. EP, December 17, 20, 22, 1842; Russel B. Nye, George Bancroft: Brahmin Rebel (New York: Knopf, 1945), p. 128. That Bryant attended at least the lecture on December 22 is indicated by his comment on the “trap” of Tuesday evening.